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James H. Hackett, Esq.

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THE

MODERN STANDARD DRAMA:

A COLLECTION

OF THE MOST POPULAR ACTING PLAYS,

With Critical Remarks,

ALSO THE STAGE BUSINESS, COSTUMES, ETC.

EDITED BY EPES SARGENT,

AUTHOR OF "VELASCO, A TRAGEDY," &C.

VOLUME IV.

CONTAINING

VIRGINIUS,	TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA,
THE KING OF THE COMMONS,	THE JEALOUS WIFE,
LONDON ASSURANCE,	THE RIVALS,
THE RENT-DAY,	PERFECTION,

AND A PORTRAIT AND MEMOIR OF MR. JAMES H. HACKETT.

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NEW YORK:

WILLIAM TAYLOR & CO., No. 2 ASTOR HOUSE,

AND JARVIS BUILDINGS, BALTIMORE.

1847.

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MODERN STANDARD DRAMA.

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MEMOIR OF JAMES H. HACKETT.

James Henry Hackett was born at 72 William street, in the city of New York, March 15th, 1800. His father, Thomas G. Hackett, though born in Holland, resided for several years in New York, and was a lineal descendant of one of the old *Feudal Barons* of Ireland who constituted the original Irish Peerage, most of which has become extinct; but according to a pedigree of the "Hackett Family," issued from the Herald Office of Ireland in 1834, and attested by the Marquis Wellesley, then Lord Lieutenant and Governor General of Ireland, the original founder was that "*Haket*"* who came over to England from Normandy with William the Conqueror, and whose name, as one of his victorious generals, is recorded and is legible to this day upon the pillar of "Battle Abbey," near Hastings. One of the lineage of this "Haket" accompanied *Strongbow* to Ireland, and it was from this branch that the father of the subject of this memoir was derived. His mother was a daughter of the Rev. Abraham Keteltas, of Jamaica, Long Island. This gentleman was the son of a Mr. Abraham Keteltas, who came to America from Holland about the year 1720. He is represented to have possessed unusual talents, which were improved by profound erudition. It is worthy of notice, that, after settling at Jamaica on Long Island, he frequently officiated in three different languages, having preached in the Dutch and French languages in his native city of New York. He was also, in 1777, chosen

* According to the original orthography of the name, which is "*Haquet*," it is evidently derived from that of a *fish* peculiar to the coast of Normandy—the *haque*; which fish appears on the shield among the other heraldic and armorial bearings of the Hackett family.

a member of the convention to frame the constitution of his native state.

"Union Hall" Academy, at Jamaica, Long Island, was the institution to which the subject of this memoir was indebted for his early education. He here displayed that vivacious, imitative turn of mind, which subsequently qualified him so admirably for the stage; and his histrionic talents were originally exerted in hitting off the peculiarities of his tutors, which he did in a manner to call forth the unqualified delight and approbation of his schoolfellows. In the autumn of 1815, he was admitted a student of Columbia College; but a severe fit of illness interrupted his classical pursuits, and, on his recovery, he betook himself to the study of the law. Coke and Blackstone were found to be uncongenial companions, however, for one so possessed with the spirit of Momus. In 1817 he entered the counting-room of a relative, with the view of becoming a merchant.

In 1819, Mr. Hackett married and took from the stage Miss Lee Sugg, of the Park Theatre, who was at that time a distinguished favourite with the public, and removed to Utica. He subsequently became extensively engaged in trade, until, ambitious of extending his sphere of enterprise, he returned to the city of New York, and became a merchant, in Front street. Here he unfortunately became inoculated with the mania for speculation, which prevailed so universally in 1825, and, in common with vast numbers of his commercial brethren, was involved in heavy losses, by the violent fluctuations in the markets and the failures, which daily took place. It was now, that he looked to the stage for the means of extricating himself from his embarrassments, and procuring the facilities for effecting an honourable adjustment of his affairs.

His first appearance on the boards of any theatre was at the Park theatre, March, 1826, as Justice Woodcock, in "Love in a Village;" but his success did not equal his own expectations or those of his friends. He seemed to have been abandoned by his accustomed humour and self-possession. He resolved, however, on making a second attempt; and appeared in an entertainment, in which he gave imitations of popular actors, and stories illustrative of American characteristics. In this experiment

he was entirely successful, and for a series of nights drew large audiences. His second great hit, was in personating one of the two Dromios in the Comedy of Errors, in which he presented a capital imitation of Barnes, who then performed the twin brother.

The applause which had been bestowed on his desultory imitations of Yankee peculiarities, now induced Mr. Hackett to try the experiment of introducing a live Yankee into some established play, where the necessary alterations could be made, without an undue violation of the probabilities of the plot. He selected the younger Colman's comedy of "Who Wants a Guinea?", the title of which he changed to that of "Jonathan in England," and substituted the character of Solomon Swap for that of Solomon Gundy. The success of the experiment is well known. Solomon Swap contributed much towards helping Mr. Hackett on to the high road to fame and fortune; and it is still one of his most laughable characters. When he proposed playing it in England, Colman grumbled somewhat, and made rather an obvious pun upon the name of his American emendator; but if those may laugh who win, the representative of Solomon Swap had no cause to be lachrymose on the occasion.

Mr. Hackett has made several visits to England, and his professional success there has, of late years, been of the most flattering description. In April, 1828, he tried his Yankee stories at Covent Garden; but they were found "undramatic, ill-arranged, too local, and too lengthy." Some imitations of Kean and Macready, however, with which he garnished his entertainment, turned the tide in his favour, and drew down the most hearty applause. He re-appeared upon the London boards, after a lapse of years, and succeeded greatly, not only in his Yankee parts, but in Falstaff and Sir Pertinax McSycophant. His *Monsieur Morbleau*, *Nimrod Wildfire*, and *Rip Van Winkle*, were admitted to be performances full of original vigour, talent, and humour. In *Lear*, he also made a highly favourable impression. During his last visit to England, he received a royal intimation, that it would be agreeable to the Queen to witness his performances, and he accordingly appeared at the Haymarket theatre, the 26th May, 1845, her Majesty and Prince Albert be-

ing present. We believe, Mr. Hackett is the first American performer, towards whom the same attention has been extended.

From Mr. Hackett's range of parts, it will be seen that he possesses remarkable versatility of talent. He played *O'Callaghan*, in the farce of "His Last Legs," before a Dublin audience, with complete success, notwithstanding they had the recollection of Power and other Irishmen in the character fresh in their minds. Mr. Hackett has recently connected himself, in the capacity of manager, with the theatre known as the "Howard Athenæum," in Boston, a beautiful and commodious house; and if the experiment, of which he has the direction, should not prove successful, it will be from no lack of experience, ability, and enterprise on his part.

No. XXV.

MODERN STANDARD DRAMA.

EDITED BY EPES SARGENT.

AUTHOR OF "VELASCO, A TRAGEDY," &c.

VIRGINIUS.

A Tragedy

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY JAMES SHERIDAN KNOWLES.

WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS, CAST OF CHARACTERS, COSTUMES, RELATIVE POSITIONS, &c.

AS PERFORMED BY MR. FORREST, MR. MACREADY, AND OTHER EMINENT TRAGEDIANS.

NEW YORK:

WM. TAYLOR & CO., No. 2 ASTOR HOUSE

AND JARVIS BUILDINGS, NORTH ST., BALTIMORE.

BOSTON:—REDDING AND COMPANY, 8 STATE STREET

PHILADELPHIA:—G. B. ZEIBER AND CO., 3 LEDGER BUILDING.

NEW ORLEANS:—J. C. MORGAN, AND JOHN SLY.

1846.

PRICE 12 1 2 CENTS.

EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION.

It is now some twenty years since the "Virginius" of Knowles was pronounced by Hazlitt the best acting tragedy of the modern stage. During that interval, nothing has been produced to render this critical sentence less just; and, with the exception of "Venice Preserved," we can call to mind no acting tragedy in the English language, out of Shakspeare, that is worthy to be placed by its side. The "Cenci" of Shelley is perhaps superior as a work of genius, as well as in breadth and intensity of tragic power; but as the nature of the story excludes that production from representation before modern audiences, it cannot be called an exception to the verdict we have given in favour of Virginius.

That there are defects of a very obvious character in this beautiful tragedy, no one can deny. We can easily believe that it was written in three months. The language is sometimes inexcusably slip-shod and slovenly; the unity of the story terminates with the death of Virginia; and the whole last act is an anti-climax. The first of these objections, it was in the power of the author to remove with a little care; but the last is inextricably blended with the story. Virginia must die, but she must also be avenged; and an additional act becomes inevitable.

There are many fine bursts of poetry in this tragedy, which are introduced with great dramatic propriety and skill. Read Virginius's reply to the exclamation of Lucius, that "Justice will be defeated"; also that exquisite thought, where, after calling on his slaughtered daughter, he waits for a response, and says:-

> "I hear a voice so fine, there's nothing lives
> 'Twixt it and silence."

Many other instances could be quoted, to show that the poet's, as well as the dramatist's genius, has been tasked in the construction of this tragedy.

"Virginius" was produced in London in the spring of 1820, at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden. It met with the most dis-

tinguished success. During its run, a rival play on the same subject, and with the same name, was represented at Drury Lane; but though Edmund Kean did what he could to buoy it up, it fell flat on the first night, and was withdrawn a night or two after. Of the personation by Macready of the principal part in Knowles's tragedy, a critic of the day, in a communication to Blackwood's Magazine, remarks: "It was a noble and complete piece of acting—without exception the most so of any this gentleman has attempted. It was full of high passion——deep and delicate pathos—intense energy, both of conception and execution; and the whole rounded off by a finished taste and discrimination. In the home scenes with *Virginia* and *Icilius*, in the first act, he was the unaffected and happy father in the bosom of his family. Nothing could be conceived with greater force than the scene at the end of the second act, where he first learns the danger of his child. But his highest and most successful effort, was reserved for the trial scene in the fourth act. Here nothing could possibly exceed the variety, the vividness, and the masterly truth of the picture throughout; and accordingly nothing could be more affecting and impressive. Mr. Charles Kemble played the love scenes with *Virginia* delightfully; and the more energetic parts, where he beards Appius to his face, and appeals to the people against his decision, and particularly where he steps in to prevent Claudius from touching his betrothed bride, were given with more power than anything we have seen from this accomplished actor. Mr. Terry's *Dentatus* was also excellent; and lastly, we must not forget Miss Foote in *Virginia*. She had evidently caught the spirit of the whole performance, and was, for once, unaffected. She seemed content to be *Virginia*, instead of Miss Foote."

Few plays have been represented on the American boards so repeatedly as this; and Mr. Forrest's personation of the Roman father has been deservedly admired, as a just and lofty embodiment of the author's conception. To those who deny that there has been a marked change of late years in the moral tone of productions intended for the stage, we commend Virginius, as an evidence that the most popular tragedy of the day is one that conveys none but the most impressive lessons of domestic purity, manly worth, and republican virtue.

DEDICATION.

TO WILLIAM MACREADY, ESQ.

My Dear Sir,

What can I do less than dedicate this Tragedy to you? This is a question which you cannot answer; but I can—I cannot do less; and if I could do more, I ought, and would.

I was a perfect stranger to you: You read my play, and at once committed yourself respecting its merits. This, perhaps, is not saying much for your head—but it says a great deal for your heart; and that is the consideration which, above all others, makes me feel happy, and proud, in subscribing myself

Your grateful Friend and Servant,

JAMES SHERIDAN KNOWLES.

London, May 20, 1820.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This Play was written in great haste, and, no doubt, abounds in defects; but it is a question whether it would have been less imperfect, had I taken a year to compose it. It was resolved and executed in about three months, in the midst of very numerous and arduous avocations. To a distinguished individual who suggested to me the idea of writing it, I shall ever feel grateful.

I owe the public an apology for the last act; and this is my apology—History gives two accounts of the manner of Appius's death: one, that he committed suicide; the other, that he was destroyed privately by the Tribunes. Had I selected for my catastrophe the latter incident, the character of the tyrant had stood too prominent; by adopting the former, I should have violated the respect due to a Christian audience. After having excited such an interest for Virginius, it would have been indecent to represent him in the attitude of taking the law into his own hands. I therefore adopted the idea of his destroying Appius in a fit of temporary insanity, which gives the catastrophe the air of a visitation of Providence.

I am most sensible of the great degree in which I am indebted to the Ladies and Gentlemen of the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden; and I beg them to believe that I feel more than I can very readily express. To forget what I owe to the Theatre where my Play was first performed, would be ungrateful; and, under any circumstances, to omit the acknowledgment of it would be unprincipled and mean. I take, therefore, this opportunity of thanking, also, the Company of the Glasgow Theatre.

PROLOGUE,

Written by J. H. Reynolds, Esq., and spoken by Miss Booth.

[*Speaking behind.*] Nay, Mr. Fawcett, give me leave,
I pray,
The audience wait, and I must have my way. [*Enters.*
What! curb a woman's tongue!—As I'm alive,
The wretch would mar our old prerogative!
Ladies, by very dint of pertinacity,
Have I preserved the glory of loquacity!

Oh! could you gaze, as I am gazing now,
And see each man behind, with gathered brow,
And clenchèd hand, (though naught my spirit damps,)
Beckoning, with threats, my presence from the lamps:
Each, as I broke my way, declared how well
His art could woo you—to be peaceable!
One is well robed—a second greatly shines
In the nice balance of *cast-iron* lines;
A third can sing—a fourth can touch your tears—
A fifth—"I'll see no more!"—a fifth appears,
Who hath been once in Italy, and seen Rome;
In short, there's quite a hubbub in the Green-Room.
But I—a very woman—careless—light,
Fleet idly to your presence this fair night;
And, craving your sweet pardon, fain would say
A kind word for the poet, and his play.

To-night, no idle nondescript lays waste
The fairy, and yet placid, bower of taste;
No story, piled with dark and cumbrous fate,
And words that stagger under their own weight;
But one of silent grandeur—simply said,
As though it were awakened from the dead!
It is a tale—made beautiful by years—
Of pure, old, Roman sorrow—old in tears!
And those you shed o'er it in childhood, may
Still fall—and fall—for sweet Virginia!

Nor doth a crownéd poet of the age,
Call the sweet spirits from the historic page;—
No old familiar dramatist hath spun
This tragic, antique web, to-night—but one,
An unknown author, in a sister land,
Waits, in young fear, the fiat of your hand

EPILOGUE,

Written by Barry Cornwall, Esq. and spoken by Miss Brunton.

Leaving the common path, which many tread,
We will not wake with jokes our poet's dead;
Nor shame the young creations of his pen
By bidding all, who 've perished, be again
The pale Virginia, in her bloody shroud,
Lies like a shrinéd saint.—Oh! then, aloud
Shall we break scurril jests, and bid depart
Those thoughts of her, which fill and teach the heart?
No moral now we offer, squared in form,
But Pity, like the sun-light, bright and warm,
Comes mixed with showers; and, fading, leaves behind
A beauty and a blossom on the mind.
We do not strain to show that "thus it grows,"
And "hence we learn" what every body knows;
But, casting idle dogmas (words) aside,
We paint a villain in his purple pride;
And, tearing down a power that grew too bold,
Show—merely what was done in days of old.
Leaving this image on the soul, we go
Unto our gentler story, touched with woe;
(With woe that wantons not, nor wears away
The heart,) and love too perfect for decay.
But whatsoe'er we do, we will not shame
Your better feeling, with an idle game
Of grin and mimicry (a loathsome task);
Or strip the great Muse of her mighty mask,
And hoot her from her throne of tears and sighs,
Until, from folly and base jest, she dies.
No: let her life be long, her reign supreme—
If but a dream, it is a glorious dream.

Dwell, then, upon our tale; and bear along
With you, deep thoughts—of love—of bitter wrong—
Of freedom—of sad pity—and lust of power.
The tale is fitted for an after hour.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

	Covent Garden, 1824.	*Park*, 1842.
Appius Claudius	Mr. Abbott.	Mr. Ryder.
Spurius Oppius	" White.	" Hunt.
Vibulanus	" Jefferies.	" S. Pearson.
Honorius	" Norris.	"
Valerius	" Vedy.	"
Caius Claudius	" Connor.	" Lovell.
Marcus	" Claremont.	" Gallot.
Dentatus	" Terry.	" Barry.
Virginius	" Macready.	" Macready.
Numitorius	" Egerton.	" Gann.
Icilius	" C. Kemble.	" Wheatley.
Lucius	" Comer.	" Crocker.
Publius, *Decius*, *Sextus* — *Soldiers*	" Mears.	" King.
	" Treby.	" Gourlay.
	" Crumpton.	" Wilmot.
Titus, *Servius*, *Cneius* — *Citizens*	" Faucit.	" Brydges.
	" Atkins.	" Povey.
	" King.	" Freeland.
Virginia	Miss Foote.	Mrs. Hunt.
Servia	Mrs. Faucit.	Miss Cushman.
Female Slave	Mrs. Chipp.	Mrs. Burrows.

COSTUMES.

APPIUS—Toga and purple stripe, fleshings, and red sandals.

SPURIUS, VIBULANUS, } General's armour, toga, and stripe flesh legs, and sandals.

CAIUS, MARCUS, } Plain togas, and sandals.

DENTATUS, VIRGINIUS, } Plain togas and armour, and black sandals. *Second dress:* Roman shirt of mail and short sword.

NUMITORIUS, ICILIUS, LUCIUS, } Plain togas: and in last act, mourning, and russet sandals.

PUBLIUS, DECIUS, SEXTUS, } Lamberkins, armour, and white kilt, flesh legs, and sandals.

TITUS, SERVIUS, } Citizens, as in Coriolanus, brown stuff dresses, flesh legs, and russet sandals.

CNEIUS.—Plain toga.

HONORIUS, VALERIUS, } Toga, with red bands; and sandals.

VIRGINIA.—Plain white—white robe, trimmed with white fringe; plain white ribbon round her head, and hanging down behind.

SERVIA.—White dress, red robe, trimmed with yellow, plain white ribbon round her head, and long ends hanging down behind.

FEMALE SLAVE.—Plain dark coloured robe.

EXITS AND ENTRANCES.

R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; R. D. *Right Door*; L. D. *Left Door*; S. E. *Second Entrance*; U. E. *Upper Entrance*; M. D. *Middle Door*.

RELATIVE POSITIONS.

R., means *Right*; L., *Left*; C., *Centre*; R. C., *Right of Centre*; L. C., *Left of Centre*.

VIRGINIUS.

ACT I.

Scene I.—*A Street in Rome.*

Enter Servius, Cneius, *and Citizens,* L.—*Citizens stand* L.

Ser. Carbo denied a hearing!

Cne. (C.) Ay, and Marcellus cast into prison, because he sued a friend of one of the Decemvirs for a sum of money he had lent him.

Ser. (R. C.) And Appius resisted not? Appius! that, in the first Decemvirate, was a god to the people.

Cne. Resisted not! Nay, was most loud in favour of the decree; but hither comes Virginius, who interested himself so much in Carbo's affair. He looks a little heated. Is not that Titus he is speaking to? Stand aside, Master, and listen. *Retire back on* L.

Enter Virginius *and* Titus, R.

Vir. (C.) Why did you make him Decemvir, and first Decemvir, too?

Tit. (R.) We had tried him, and found him honest.

Vir. (L. C.) And could you not have remained content? Why try him again to find him dishonest? Knew ye not he was a Patrician, and of the Claudian family?

Tit. He laid down the Consulate——

Vir. Ha! ha! ha! to be elected into the Decemvirate, and he was so; and he laid down his office of Decemvir, to be re-elected into the Decemvirate, and he is so: Ay, by Jupiter! and to the exclusion of his late colleagues! Did not Titus Genutius lay down the Consulate?

Tit. He did.

Vir. Was he not next to Appius in the Decemvirate?

Tit. He was.

Vir. Did you not find him honest?

Tit. We did find him honest.

Vir. As honest as Appius Claudius?

Tit. Quite as honest.

Vir. Quite as honest! And why not re-elect him Decemvir? Most sapient people! You re-elect Appius into the Decemvirate for his honesty, and you thrust Titus out of the Decemvirate—I suppose for his honesty also! Why, Appius was sick of the Decemvirate! [*Goes*, L.

Ser. (C.) I never heard him say so.

Vir. (L.) But he did say so—say so in my hearing; in the presence of the senators, Valerius and Caius Claudius, and I don't know how many others. 'Twas known to the whole body of the Senate—not that he was sick, but that he said so. Yes! yes! he and his colleagues, he said, had done the work of the Republic for a whole year, and it was now but just to grant them a little repose, and appoint others to succeed them.

Tit. Well, well, we can only say he changed his mind.

Vir. No, no, we needn't say that, neither; as he had labored in the Decemvirate, perhaps he thought he might as well repose in the Decemvirate.

Tit. I know not what he thought. He is Decemvir, and we made him so, and cannot help ourselves. Fare you well, Virginius. Come, let's to the Forum.

[*Exeunt all but Virginius.*

Vir. [*Still on* L., *looking after them and pointing.*]
You cannot help yourselves! Indeed, you cannot;
You helped to put your masters on your backs.
They like their seat, and make you show your paces;
They ride you—sweat you—curb you—lash you—and
You cannot throw them off with all your mettle;
But here comes one, whose share in giving you
To such unsparing riders, touches me
More nearly, for that I've an interest
In proving him a man of fair and most
Erect integrity. (C.) Good day, Icilius.

Enter ICILIUS, R. S. E.

Ici. (R. C.) Worthy Virginius! 'tis an evil day
For Rome, that gives her more convincing proof,
The thing she took for hope, is but a base

And wretched counterfeit! Our new Decemvirs
Are anything but friends to justice and
Their country.
Vir. You, Icilius, had a hand
In their election. You applied to me
To aid you with my vote in the Comitia;
I told you then, and tell you now again,
I am not pleased when a Patrician bends
His head to a Plebeian's girdle! Mark me!
I'd rather he should stand aloof, and wear
His shoulder high—especially the nephew
Of Caius Claudius.
Ici. I would have pledged my life—
Vir. 'Twas a high gage, and men have staked a higher
On grounds as poor as your's—their honour, boy!
Icilius, I have heard it all—your plans—
The understanding 'twixt the heads of the people—
Of whom, Icilius, you are reckoned one, and
Worthily—and Appius Claudius—all—
'Twas every jot disclosed to me.
Ici. By whom?
Vir. Siccius Dentatus.
Ici. He disclosed it to you!
Siccius Dentatus is a crabbed man.
Vir. Siccius Dentatus is an honest man!
There's not a worthier man in Rome! How now?
Has he deceived me? Do you call him liar?
My friend! my comrade! honest Siccius,
That has fought in six-score battles?
Ici. Good Virginius,
Siccius Dentatus is my friend—the friend
Of every honest man in Rome—a brave man—
A most brave man. Except yourself, Virginius,
I do not know a man I prize above
Siccius Dentatus—yet he's a crabbed man.
Vir. Yes, yes; he is a crabbed man.
Ici. A man
Who loves too much to wear a jealous eye.
Vir. No, not a whit!—where there is double dealing,
You are the best judge of your own concerns;
Yet, if it please you to communicate
With me upon this subject, come and see me.

I told you, boy, I favoured not this stealing
And winding into place. What he deserves,
An honest man dares challenge 'gainst the world—
But come and see me. [*Going*, R.] Appius Claudius chosen
Decemvir, and his former colleagues, that
Were quite as honest as himself, not chosen—
No, not so much as named by him—who named
Himself, and his new associates! (R.) Well, 'tis true,
Dog fights with dog, but honesty is not
A cur, doth bait his fellow—and e'en dogs,
By habit of companionship, abide
In terms of faith and cordiality—
But come and see me. [*A shout*, L.
Ici. (C.) Appius comes!
The people still throng after him with shouts,
Unwilling to believe their Jupiter
Has marked them for his thunder. Will you stay
And see the homage that they render him?
Vir. Not I! Stay you; and, as you made him, hail him;
And shout, and wave your hand, and cry, long live
Our first and last Decemvir, Appius Claudius!
For he is first, and last, and every one!
Rome owes you much, Icilius—Fare you well—
I shall be glad to see you at my house.
[*Exeunt, Virginius*, R., *Icilius*, L.

Enter Appius Claudius, Siccius Dentatus, Lucius, Titus, Servius, Marcus, *and Citizens, shouting*, R. S. E.

Tit. Long live our first Decemvir!
Long live Appius Claudius!
Most noble Appius! Appius and the Decemvirate forever! [*Citizens shout.*
App. (C.) My countrymen and fellow-citizens,
We will deserve your favour.
Tit. (L.) You have deserved it,
And will deserve it.
App. For that end we named
Ourself Decemvir.
Tit. You could not have named a better man.
Den. (R.) For his own purpose. [*Aside.*
App. Be assured, we hold
Our power but for your good. Your gift it was;

And gifts make surest debtors. Fare you well—
And, for your salutations, pardon me
If I repay you only with an echo—
Long live the worthy citizens of Rome!

[*Exit Appius, &c., the people shouting*, L.

Den. [*Going*, C.] That was a very pretty echo! (C.)—a most soft echo. I never thought your voices were half so sweet! a most melodious echo! I'd have you ever after make your music before the Patricians' Palaces; they give most exquisite responses!—especially that of Appius Claudius! a most delicate echo!

Tit. What means Dentatus?

Ser. He's ever carping—nothing pleases him.

Den. (R.) Oh! yes—you please me—please me mightily, I assure you.—You are noble legislators, take most especial care of your own interest, bestow your votes most wisely, too—on him who has the wit to get you into the humour; and withal, have most musical voices—most musical—if one may judge by their echo.

Tit. (R.) Why, what quarrel have you with our choice? Could we have chosen better?—I say there are ten honest Decemvirs we have chosen.

Den. I pray you, name them me.

Tit. There's Appius Claudius, first Decemvir.

Den. Ay, call him the head; you are right. Appius Claudius, the head. Go on!

Tit. And Quintus Fabius Vibulanus.

Den. The body, that eats and drinks while the head thinks. Call him Appius's stomach. Fill him, and keep him from cold and indigestion, and he'll never give Appius the head-ache! Well?—There's excellent comfort in having a good stomach!—Well?

Tit. There's Cornelius, Marcus Servilius, Minucius, and Titus Antonius.

Den. (C.) Arms, legs, and thighs!

Tit. And Marcus Rabuleius.

Den. (R. C.) He'll do for a hand, and, as he's a Senator, we'll call him the right-hand. We couldn't do less, you know, for a Senator! Well?

Luc. At least, you'll say we did well in electing Quintius Petilius, Caius Duellius, and Spurius Oppius, men of our order! sound men! "known sticklers for the people"—at least you'll say we did well in that!

Den. And who dares say otherwise? "Well!" one might as well say "ill" as "well." Well is the very skirt of commendation; next neighbour to that mire and gutter, "ill." "Well," indeed! you acted like yourselves! Nay, e'en yourselves could not have acted better! Why, had you not elected them—Appius would have gone without his left hand, and each of his two feet.

Ser. (c.) Out! you are dishonest!

Den. Ha!

Ser. What would content you?

Den. A post in a hot battle! Out, you cur! Do you talk to me!

Citizen. [*From behind.*] Down with him, he does nothing but insult the people.

[*The Crowd approach Dentatus, threateningly.*

Enter Icilius, *suddenly*, l. s. e.

Ici. Stand back! Who is't that says, down with Siccius Dentatus? Down with him! 'Tis what the enemy could never do; and shall we do it for them? Who uttered that dishonest word? Who uttered it, I say? Let him answer a fitter, though less worthy mate, Lucius Icilius!

Citizens. Stand back, and hear Icilius!

Ici. (c.) What! haven't I voted for the Decemvirs, and do I snarl at his jests? Has he not a right to jest? the good, honest Siccius Dentatus, that alone, at the head of the veterans, vanquished the Œqui for you. Has he not a right to jest? For shame! get to your houses! The worthy Dentatus! Cheer for him, if you are Romans! Cheer for him, before you go! Cheer for him, I say!

[*Exeunt Citizens, shouting*, r. s. e.

Den. (c.) And now, what thanks do you expect from me, Icilius?

Ici. (r. c.) None.

Den. By Jupiter, young man, had you thus stepped before me in the heat of battle, I would have cloven you down—but I'm obliged to you, Icilius—and hark you! There's a piece of furniture in the house of a friend of mine, that's called Virginius, I think you've set your heart upon—dainty enough—yet not amiss for a young man to covet. Ne'er lose your hopes! He may be brought into the mind to part with it.—As to these curs, I question which I value more, their fawnings, or their snarlings.—I thank you, boy!

Do you walk this way?—I am glad of it! Come—'Tis a noble Decemvirate you have chosen for us! Come!

[*Exeunt*, R.

Scene II.—*Virginius's House.*

Enter Virginius *and* Servia, *with some of Virginia's work in her hand.*

Vir. (C.) And is this all you have observed? I think
There's nothing strange in that. An L and an I,
Twined with a V. Three very innocent letters
To have bred such mischief in thy brain, good Servia!
Come, read this riddle to me.

Serv. (R. C.) You may laugh,
Virginius, but I will read the riddle right.
The L doth stand for Lucius; and the I,
Icilius; which, I take it, will compose
Lucius Icilius.

Vir. So it will, good Servia.

Serv. Then, for the V; why, that is plain Virginia.

Vir. And now, what conjuration find you here?

Serv. What should I find but love? The maid's in love,
And it is with Icilius. Look, the wreath
Is made of roses, that entwines the letters.

Vir. And this is all?

Serv. And is it not enough?
You'll find this figuring where'er you look:
There's not a piece of dainty work she does—
Embroidery or painting—not a task
She finishes, but on the skirt or border,
In needle-work or pencil, this, her secret,
The silly wench betrays.

Vir. Go, send her to me—
Stay! Have you spoke to her of it?

Serv. (R.) I! Not I, indeed; I left that task to you—
Though once I asked her what the letters meant,
She laughed, and drew a scratch across them: but
Had scarce done so, ere her fair visage fell,
For grief that she had spoiled the cyphers—" and
" A sigh came out, and then almost a tear;
" And she did look as piteous on the harm
" That she had done, as she had done it to

"A thing had sense to feel it." Never after
She let me note her at the work again.
She had good reason!

Vir. (L.) Send her to me, Servia. [*Exit Servia,* R.
There's something here that looks as it would bring me
Anticipation of my wish. I think
Icilius loves my daughter—(C.) nay, I know it;
And such a man I'd challenge for her husband;—
And only waited till her forward spring
Put on a little more the genial likeness
Of colouring into summer, (R. C.) ere I sought
To nurse a flower, which, blossoming too early,
Too early often dies; "but if it springs
"Spontaneous and unlooked for, woos our hand
"To tend and cherish it, the growth is healthful:
"And 'twere untimely, as unkind, to check it."
I'll ascertain it shortly—soft, she comes. [*Sits,* C.

Enter VIRGINIA, M. D.

Virg. [*Standing on his* L.) Well, father, what's your will?

Vir. I wished to see you,
To ask you of your tasks—how they go on—
And what your masters say of you—what last
You did. I hope you never play
The truant?

Virg. The truant! No, indeed, Virginius.

Vir. I am sure you do not—kiss me!

Virg. Oh! my father,
I am so happy when you're kind to me!

Vir. You are so happy when I'm kind to you!
Am I not always kind? I never spoke
An angry word to you in all my life,
Virginia! You are happy when I'm kind!
That's strange; and makes me think you have some reason
To fear I may be otherwise than kind—
Is't so, my girl?

Virg. Indeed, I did not know
What I was saying to you!

Vir. Why, that's worse
And worse! What! when you said your father's kind

Made you so happy, am I to believe
You were not thinking of him?
Virg. I—— [*Greatly confused.*
Vir. Go, fetch me
The latest task you did. [*Exit Virginia,* M. D.
It is enough:
Her artless speech, like chrystal, shows the thing
'Twould hide, but only covers. 'Tis enough!
She loves, and fears her father may condemn.

Re-enter VIRGINIA *with a painting.*

Virg. Here, Sir.
Vir. What's this?
Virg. 'Tis Homer's history
Of great Achilles parting from Briséis.
Vir. You have done it well. The colouring is good,
The figures well designed. 'Tis very well!—
Whose face is this you've given to Achilles?
Virg. Whose face?
Vir. I've seen this face! Tut! Tut! I know it
As well as I do my own, yet can't bethink me
Whose face it is!
Virg. You mean Achilles' face?
Vir. Did I not say so? 'Tis the very face
Of—No! No! Not of him. There's too much youth
And comeliness; and too much fire, to suit
The face of Siccius Dentatus.
Virg. Oh!
You surely never took it for his face!
Vir. Why, no; for now I look again, I'd swear
You lost the copy ere you drew the head,
And, to requite Achilles for the want
Of his own face, contrived to borrow one
From Lucius Icilius. My Dentatus,

Enter DENTATUS, L.

I am glad to see you! [*Rises.—Virginia retires,* R.
Den. (L. C.) 'Tis not for my news, then.
Vir. Your news! What news?
Den. More violence and wrong from these new masters of ours, our noble Decemvirs—these demi-gods of the good people of Rome! No man's property is safe from

them. Nay, it appears we hold our wives and daughters but by the tenure of their will. Their liking is the law. The Senators themselves, scared at their audacious rule, withdraw themselves to their villas, and leave us to our fate. There are rumours, also, of new incursions by the Sabines.

Vir. Rome never saw such days.

Den. And she'll see worse, unless I fail in my reckoning. Is that Virginia? [*Goes* R. *to her.*] I saw her not before. How does the fair Virginia? Why, she is quite a woman. I was just now wishing for a daughter.

Vir. A plague, you mean.

Den. (R.) I am sure you should not say so.

Virg. (R.) Indeed he should not; and he does not say so,
Dentatus—not that I am not a plague,
But that he does not think me one, for all
I do to weary him. I am sure, Dentatus,
If to be thought to do well is to do well,
There's nothing I do ill: But it is far
From that! for few things do I as I ought—
Yet everything is well done with my father,
Dentatus.

Vir. [*Goes to them.*] That's well done, is it not, my friend? [*Aside.*
But if you had a daughter, what would you do with her?

Den. I'd give her to Icilius. I should have been just now torn to pieces, but for his good offices. The gentle citizens, that are driven about by the Decemvirs' Lictors, like a herd of tame oxen, and, with most beast-like docility, only low applauses to them in return, would have done me the kindness to knock my brains out; but the noble Icilius bearded them singly, and rallied them into temper. Had I a daughter worthy of such a husband, he should have such a wife, and a Patrician's dower along with her.

Vir. I wish to speak with you, Dentatus. [*They retire to* M. D.] Icilius is a young man whom I honor, but so far only as his conduct gives me warrant. He has had, as thou knowest, a principal hand in helping us to our Decemvirs, It may be that he is what I would gladly think him: but I must see him clearly, clearly, Dentatus. "If he has acted "with the remotest understanding, touching the views of

"these new tyrants that we are cursed withal, I disclaim
"him as my friend! I cast him off forever?"

[*Exeunt Virginius and Dentatus*, M. D.

Virg. (D.) How is it with my heart? I feel as one
That has lost everything, and just before
Had nothing left to wish for! He will cast
Icilius off!—I never told it yet;
But take of me, thou gentle air, the secret—
And ever after breathe more balmy sweet—
I love Icilius! "Yes, although to thee
"I fear to tell it, that hast neither eye
"To scan my looks, nor voice to echo me,
"Nor e'en an o'er-apt ear to catch my words;
"Yet, sweet invisible confidant, my secret
"Once being thine—I tell thee, and I tell thee
"Again—and yet again," I love Icilius!
He'll cast Icilius off!—not if Icilius
Approve his honour. That he'll ever do;
He speaks and looks, and moves a thing of honour,
Or honour never yet spoke—looked, or moved,
Or was a thing of earth. (C.) Oh, come, Icilius:
Do but appear, and thou art vindicated.

Enter Icilius, L.

Ici. Virginia! sweet Virginia! sure I heard
My name pronounced. [*Both*, C.) Was it by thee, Virginia?
Thou dost not answer? Then it was by thee—
Oh! wouldst thou tell me why thou nam'dst Icilius!

Virg. My father is incensed with thee. Dentatus
Has told him of the new Decemvirate,
How they abuse their office. You, he knows,
Have favoured their election, and he fears
May have some understanding of their plans.

Ici. He wrongs me, then!

Virg. I thank the gods!

Ici. For me!
Virginia? Do you thank the gods for me?
Your eye is moist—yet that may be for pity;
Your hand doth tremble—that may be for fear;
Your cheek is covered o'er with blushes! What,
Oh, what can that be for?

Virg. Icilius, leave me!
Ici. Leave thee, Virginia? Oh! a word—a word
Trembles upon my tongue, which, if it match
The thought that moves thee now, and thou wilt let me
Pronounce that word, to speak that thought for thee,
I'll breathe—though I expire in the extacy
Of uttering it.
Virg. Icilius, will you leave me?
Ici. Love! Love! Virginia! Love! If I have spoke
Thy thought aright, ne'er be it said again,
The heart requires more service than the tongue
Can, at its best, perform. My tongue hath served
Two hearts—but, lest it should o'erboast itself,
Two hearts with but one thought. Virginia!
Virginia, speak— [*She covers her face with her hands.*
Oh, I have loved thee long:
So much the more extatic my delight,
To find thee mine at length!
Virg. My secret's yours.
Keep it, and honour it, Icilius.

Enter Virginius *and* Dentatus *behind,* M. D.

Vir. Icilius here!
Virg. I ask thee now to leave me.
Ici. Leave thee! who leaves a treasure he has coveted
So long, and found so newly, ere he scans it
Again, and o'er again; and asks and answers,
Repeats and answers, answers and repeats,
The half-mistrustful, half-assured question—
And is it mine indeed?
Virg. Indeed! indeed!
Now leave me.
Ici. I must see thy father first,
And lay my soul before him.
Virg. Not to-night.
Ici. Now worse than ever, dear Virginia,
Can I endure his doubts; I'll lay my soul
Naked before him—win his friendship quite,
Or lose myself forever! [*Going, is met by Virginius.*
Vir. (R. C.) Stop, Icilius!
Thou seest that hand? It is a Roman's, boy;
'Tis sworn to liberty—it is the friend
Of honour—Dost thou think so?

Ici. (R. C.) Do I think
Virginius owns that hand?
Vir. Then you'll believe
It has an oath deadly to tyranny,
And is the foe of falsehood! By the gods,
Knew it the lurking place of treason, though
It were a brother's heart, 'twould drag the caitiff
Forth. Dar'st thou take that hand?
Ici. I dare, Virginius.
Vir. Then take it? Is it weak in thy embrace?
Returns it not thy gripe? Thou wilt not hold
Faster by it, than it will hold by thee!
I overheard thee say, thou wast resolved
To win my friendship quite. Thou can'st not win
What thou hast won already!—You will stay
And sup with us to-night?
Den. To be sure he will!
Vir. And hark you, sir:
At your convenient time, appoint a day
Your friends and kinsmen may confer with me—
There is a bargain I would strike with you.
Come, to the supper-room. [*Pausing*, R.—*Virginia stands*, L., *Icilius*, C.] Do you wait for me
To lead Virginia in, or will you do it?
[*Icilius goes eagerly to Virginia, and exits with her*, R.
Come on, I say; come on. Your hand, Dentatus.
[*Exeunt*, R.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Street.*

Enter PUBLIUS, R., *and* SEXTUS, L.

Pub. This way! We muster at the Flaminian gate.
Sex. Shall we not wait for Decius?
Pub. No; were he ten times Decius. They'll have already begun their march. Come on!

Enter Numitorius, L..

Num. Do you belong to the fourth legion?

Pub. We do.

Num. They are upon their march, then.

Pub. I told you so. Come on! come on!

[*Exeunt Soldiers.*

Enter Lucius, R.

Luc. Numitorius, what soldiers were those that just now parted from you?

Num. Soldiers hastening to overtake the army, that's now upon its march.

Luc. 'Tis all confirmed, then; the Sabines are in force upon our borders.

Num. I pray you, tell me something new! Know you not the senate has met, and the Decemvirs have come off triumphant, in spite of all opposition?

Luc. Should they have been opposed in such a strait as this?

Num. Ay, should they! They dared not have armed a single citizen without the order of the Senate; which, had they not obtained, the country would have been left naked to the foe, and then they had been forced to make room for more popular magistrates.

Luc. Why, were they not opposed, then?

Num. Did not I tell you they were opposed? Caius Claudius, Appius's own uncle, and Honorius, that noble senator, opposed them: and it was like to go against them, but for the brawling insolence of Spurius Oppius, and the effrontery of the head Decemvir, backed by the young Patricians.

Luc. So they are empowered to take up arms?

Num. To be sure they are: and they have done so.—One body has already marched, and by this time, no doubt, has come to blows with the enemy. The levy is still proceeding. All the Decemvirs, but Appius, take the field. He remains in Rome to keep good order, that is the violater of all order. Why, where have you been, Lucius, to have felt no movement of so great and wide a stir? Your brother meets Virginius at his house to-day.—Come with me thither, for you, I know, are bid. Lucius, there's no huzzaing for your Decemvirs now.—Come on, we have outstaid the hour. [*Exeunt*, L.

SCENE II.—*Virginius's House.*

Enter VIRGINIUS, ICILIUS, NUMITORIUS, LUCIUS, *and others*, L.

Vir. (C.) Welcome, Icilius! Welcome, friends! Icilius,
I did design to speak with you of feasting
And merriment, but war is now the word;
One that unlovingly keeps time with mirth,
Unless war's own—whene'er the battle's won,
And, safe carousing, comrades drink to victory!
Ici. Virginius! have you changed your mind?
Vir. My mind?
What mind? How now! Are you that boy Icilius,
You set your heart so earnestly upon
A dish of poor confections, that to balk you
Makes you look blank? I did design to feast you
Together with your friends—The times are changed—
The march, the tent, the fight becomes us now!
Ici. (L. C.) Virginius!
Vir. Well?
Ici. Virginius!
Vir. How the boy
Reiterates my name!
Ici. There's not a hope
I have, but is the client of Virginius.
Vir. (C.) Well, well! I only meant to put it off;
We'll have the revel yet! the board shall smoke!
The cup shall sparkle, and the jest shall soar
And mock us from the roof! Will that content you?
Not till the war be done, though—Yet, ere then,
Some tongue, that now needs only wag, to make
The table ring, may have a tale to tell
So petrifying, that it cannot utter it!
I'll make all sure, that you may be my guest
At any rate—although you should be forced
To play the host for me, and feast yourself.
Look here, [*Shows a parchment to Icilius.*
How think you? Will it meet the charge?
Will it not do? We want a witness, though!
I'll bring one; whom, if you approve, I'll sign
The bond. I'll wait upon you instantly. [*Exit*, R

Luc. (L.) How feel you now, Icilius?
Ici. (C.) Like a man
Whom the next moment makes, or quite unmakes.
With the intensity of exquisite
Suspense, my breathing thickens, and my heart
Beats heavily, and with remittant throb,
As like to lose its action.—See! my hope
Is blessed! I live! I live! [*Stands*, L.

Enter VIRGINIUS, R., *conducting* VIRGINIA, *with* NUMITORIUS.

Vir. (R.) [*Holding his daughter's hand.*] You are my witnesses,
That this young creature I present to you,
I do pronounce—my profitably cherished,
And most deservedly beloved child;
My daughter, truly filial—both in word
And act—yet even more in act than word;
And—for the man who seeks to win her love—
A virgin, from whose lips a soul as pure
Exhales, as e'er responded to the blessing
Breathed in a parent's kiss. [*Kisses her.*] Icilius!
[*Icilius rushes towards Virginius, and kneels*, C.
Since
You are upon your knees, young man, look up;
And lift your hands to heaven—You will be all
Her father has been—added unto all
A lover would be!
Ici. All that man should be
To woman, I will be to her!
Vir. The oath
Is registered! [*Icil. rises.*] Didst thou but know, [*Takes a hand of each,*] young man,
How fondly I have watched her, since the day
Her mother died, and left me to a charge
Of double duty bound—how she hath been
My pondered thought by day, my dream by night,
My prayer, my vow, "my offering, my praise,"
My sweet companion, pupil, tutor, child!—
Thou would'st not wonder, that my drowning eye,
And choking utterance, upbraid my tongue,
That tells thee, she is thine! [*Joins their hands.*] Icilius,

I do betroth her to thee; let but the war
Be done—you shall espouse her. Friends, a word!
[*Virginius and the rest exeunt*, M. D.
Ici. [*holding her hand.*] Virginia! my Virginia! I am all
Dissolved—o'erpowered with the munificence
Of this auspicious hour—And thou, nor mov'st,
Nor look'st—nor speak'st—to bless me with a sign
Of sweet according joy! I love thee, but
To make thee happy! If to make thee so
Be bliss denied to me—lo, I release
The gifted hand—that I would faster hold,
Than wretches, bound for death, would cling to life—
If thou would'st take it back—then take it back.
Virg. I take it back—to give it thee again!
Ici. Oh, help me to a word will speak my bliss,
Or I am beggared—No! there is not one!
There cannot be: for never man had bliss
Like mine to name.
Virg. "Thou dost but beggar me,
"Icilius, when thou mak'st thyself a bankrupt;
"Placing a value on me far above
"My real little worth."—I'd help thee to
A hundred words; each one of which would far
O'er-rate thy gain, and yet no single one
Rate over high!
Ici. Thou could'st not do it! No:
Thou could'st not do it! Every term of worth
Writ down and doubled, then the whole summed up,
Would leave with thee a rich remainder still!—
Pick from each rarer pattern of thy sex
Her rarest charm, till thou hast every charm
Of soul and body, that can blend in woman,
I would out-paragon the paragon
With thee!
"*Virg.* And if thou would'st, I'd find thee for
"Thy paragon, a mate—if that can be
"A mate, which doth transcend the thing 'tis ta'en
"To match—would make thy paragon look poor,
"And I would call that so o'ermatching mate,
"Icilius."
"*Ici.*" No! I will not let thee win
On such a theme as this!

Virg. Nor will I drop
The controversy, that the richer makes me,
The more I lose.
Ici. My sweet Virginia,
We do but lose and lose, and win and win;
"Playing for nothing but to lose and win."
Then let us stop the game—and thus I stop it. [*Kisses her.*

Re-enter Virginius *and the others,* m. d.

Vir. Witness, my friends, that seal! Observe, it is
A living one! It is Icilius' seal;
And stamped upon as true and fair a bond—
Though it receive the impress blushingly—
As ever signet kissed! Are all content?
Speak, else! She is thy free affianced wife,
Thou art her free affianced husband! Come,
We have o'erdrawn our time—Farewell, Virginia;
Thy future husband for a time must be
Bellona's. To thy tasks again, my child;
Be thou the bride of study for a time.
Farewell!
Virg. (r.) My father!
Vir. (r.) May the Gods protect thee.
Virg. My father!
Vir. Does the blood forsake thy cheek?
Come to my arms once more! Remember, girl,
The first and foremost debt a Roman owes,
Is to his country; and it must be paid,
If need be, with his life.—Why, how you hold me!
Icilius, take her from me! [*Icilius goes to her.*] Hoa!
Within!
Within, there! Servia!

Enter Servia, l.

Look to your child!
Come, boy.
Ici. (r.) Farewell, Virginia.
Vir. Take her in!
Virg. The gods be with thee, my Icilius! Father,
The gods be with thee—and Icilius!
Vir. I swear, a battle might be fought and won
In half the time! Now once for all, farewell;

Your sword and buckler, boy! The foe! the foe!
Does he not tread on Roman ground? Come on!
Come on, charge on him! drive him back! or die!
[*Exeunt, Virginia and Servia*, R., *the rest*, L.

Scene III.—*Appius's House.*

Enter Appius, L.

App. It was a triumph, the achieving which,
O'erpaid the risk was run—and that was great.
They have made trial of their strength, and learned
Its value from defeat. (C.) The Senate knows
Its masters now; and the Decemvirate,
To make its reign eternal, only wants
Its own decree, which little pains will win.
Ere this, the foe has, for his mad invasion,
Been paid with chastisement. "Retired within
"His proper limits, leisure waits upon us
"To help us to the recompence, decreed
"To our noble daring, who have set ourselves
"In such high seats, as at our feet array
"The wealth, and power, and dignity of Rome,
"In absolute subjection! Tyranny!
"How godlike is thy port! Thou giv'st, and tak'st,
"And ask'st no other leave, than what thy own
"Imperial will accords.—Jove does no more!"
Now, Claudius——

Enter Claudius, R.

Clau. We have suffered a defeat!
App. What! The Decemvirs fly?
Clau. The soldiers fight
With only half a heart. "The other half
"Looks on, and cares not which side proves the winner."
App. (C.) Then decimate them. Traitors! Recreants!
Why, we shall have them at our very doors!
Have we lost ground, my Claudius?
Clau. (R. C.) None, except
What we've retraced in fame. We strove to teach
The enemy their road lay backwards, but
They would not turn their faces for us. Each
Retains his former line.

Enter Marcus, r.

App. What news?
Mar. (r.) The Œqui
Still press upon us. Rumours are afloat
Of new disasters, which the common cry,
Be sure, still multiplies and swells. Dentatus,
That over-busy, crabbed veteran,
Walks up and down among the people, making
Your plans his theme of laughter. Naught he stints
That may reflect you in an odious light,
And lower the Decemvirate.
App. A dungeon
Would do good service to him! Once within,
Strangling were easy! We must stop his mouth—
"Unwholesome food—or liquor"—Where was he
When last you heard him?
Mar. In the Forum.
App. So!
He is past service, is he not? Some way
To clear the city of him. Come, we'll hear him,
And answer him, and silence him! 'Tis well
The dog barks forth his spleen; it puts us on
Our guard against his bite. Come, to the Forum!

[*Exeunt*, r.

Scene IV.—*The Forum.*

Enter Dentatus, Titus, Servius, *and Citizens*, r.

Tit. (c.) What's to be done?
Den. (c.) We'll be undone—that's to be done.
Ser. We'll do away with the Decemvirate.
Den. You'll do away with the Decemvirate? The Decemvirate will do away with you! You'll do away with yourselves! Do nothing—The enemy will do away with both of you. In another month, a Roman will be a stranger in Rome. A fine pass we are come to, Masters!
Tit. (r.) But something must be done.
Den. Why, what would you have? You shout and clap your hands, as if it were a victory you heard of; and yet you cry—Something must be done! Truly, I know not what that something is, unless it be to make you General. How say you, Masters?

Ser. We'd follow any man that knew how to lead us, and would rid us of our foes, and the Decemvirate together.

Den. You made these Decemvirs! You are strangely discontented with your own work! And you are overcunning workmen, too.—You put your materials so firmly together, there's no such thing as taking them asunder! What you build, you build—except it be for your own good.—There you are bunglers at your craft. Ha! ha! ha! I cannot but laugh to think how you toiled, and strained, and sweated, to rear the stones of the building one above another, when I see the sorry faces you make at it!

Tit. But tell us the news again.

Den. Is it so good? Does it so please you? Then prick your ears again, and listen.—We have been beaten again—beaten back on our own soil. Rome has seen its haughty masters fly before chastisement, like slaves—returning cries for blows—and all this of your Decemvirs, gentlemen.

1*st Cit.* (r.) Huzza for it again! [*People shout.*

2*d Cit.* (r.) Hush! Appius comes.

Den. (r.) And do you care for that? You that were, just now, within a stride of taking him and his colleagues by the throat? You'll do away with the Decemvirs, will you? And let but one of them appear, you dare not, for your life, but keep your spleen within your teeth! Listen to me, now! I'll speak the more for Appius——

Enter Appius Claudius *and* Marcus, *preceded by Lictors,* r. u. e.

I say, to the eternal infamy of Rome, the foe has chased her sons, like hares, on their own soil, where they should prey like lions—and so they would, had they not keepers to tame them.

App. (c.) What's that you are saying to the people, Siccius Dentatus?

Den. I am regaling them with the news.

App. The news?

Den. (r. c.) Ay, the news—the newest that can be had; and the more novel, because unlooked for. Who ever thought to see the eagle in the talons of the kite?

App. It is not well done in you, Dentatus, to chafe a sore. It makes it rankle. If your surgery has learned no better, it should keep its hands to itself! You have very little to do, to busy yourself after this fashion.

Den. I busy myself as I like, Appius Claudius.

App. I know you do, when you labour to spread disaffection among the people, and bring the Decemvirs into contempt.

Den. The Decemvirs bring themselves into contempt.

App. Ha! dare you say so?

Den. [*Closer to him.*] Dare! I have dared cry, "Come on!" to a cohort of bearded warriors—Is it thy smooth face should appal me? Dare! it never yet flurried me to use my arm—Shall I not, think you, be at my ease, when I but wag my tongue? Dare, indeed!

[*Laughs contemptuously.*

App. Your grey hairs should keep company with honester speech!

Den. Shall I show you, Appius, the company they are wont to keep? Look here! and here! [*Uncovering his forehead, and showing scars.*] These are the vouchers of honest deeds—such is the speech with which my grey hairs keep company. I tell you to your teeth, the Decemvirs bring themselves into contempt.

App. What, are they not serving their country at the head of her armies?

Den. They'd serve her better in the body of her armies! I'd name for thee a hundred Centurions would make better generals. A common soldier of a year's active service would take his measures better. Generals! Our generals were wont to teach us how to win battles.—Tactics are changed—Your generals instruct us how to lose them.

App. Do you see my lictors?

Den. There are twelve of them.

App. What, if I bid them seize thee?

Den. They'd blush to do it.

App. Why, now, Dentatus, I begin to know you;
I fancied you a man that loved to vent
His causeless anger in an under breath,
And speak it in the ear—and only then
When there was safety! Such a one, you'll own,
Is dangerous; and, to be trusted as

A friend or foe, unworthy. But I see
You rail to faces.—Have you not so much
Respect for Appius, as to take him by
The hand—when he confesses you have some
Pretence to quarrel with his colleagues' plans,
And find fault with himself? Which, yet you'll own,
May quite as well be kindly done, Dentatus,
As harshly. Had you only to myself
Declared your discontents, the more you had railed
The more I should have thanked you.

Den. Had I thought—

App. And have you been campaigning then so long,
And prosperously—and mistrust you, Siccius,
That a young scarless soldier, like myself,
Would listen to your tutoring? See, now,
How much you have mistaken me! Dentatus,
In a word—Can you assist the generals?
And will you?

Den. I have all the will,—but as
For the ability—

App. Tut! tut! Dentatus,
You vex me now! This coyness sits not well on you.
You know, as well as I, you have as much
Ability as will. I would not think you
A man that loved to find fault, but to find fault!
Surely, the evil you complain of, you
Would lend a hand to remedy! See, now,
'Tis fairly put to you—what say you?

Den. Appius!
You may use me as you please!

App. And that will be,
As you deserve! I'll send you, as my legate,
To the army. [*Shout from the people.*] Do you hear your friends, Dentatus?
A lucky omen, that! Away! away!
Apprise your house—prepare for setting out;
I'll hurry your credentials. Minutes, now,
Rate high as hours! Assist my colleagues with
Your counsel:—if their plans displease you, why
Correct them—change them—utterly reject them!
And if you meet obstruction—notice me,
And I will push it by.—There now: your hand!

Again, away! All the success attend you,
That Appius wishes you!
Den. Success is from
The Gods, whose hand soe'er it pleases them
To send it by. I know not what success
'Tis Appius' wish they send; but this I know,
I am a soldier; and, as a soldier, I
Am bound to serve. All the success I ask,
Is that which benefits my country, Appius. [*Exit Den.* L.
App. (C.) [*Aside.*] You have served her over long!—
Now for our causes. [*Ascends Tribunal near* R. S. E.
Claud. (L. C.) [*To Mar.*] Do you see the drift of this?
Marc. (L. C.) I cannot guess it.
Claud. Nor I.
App. [*To a Plebeian,* C.] Are you the suitor in this cause? Speak!
Ple. Noble Appius, if there's law in Rome
To right a man most injured, to that law
Against yon proud Patrician I appeal.
App. No more of that, I say! Because he's rich
And great, you call him proud! 'Tis not unlike,
Because you're poor and mean, you call yourself
Injured.—Relate your story; and, so please you,
Spare epithets!
Ple. Grant me a minute's pause,
I shall begin. [*Virginia at this moment crosses the Stage with her Nurse, and is met by Numitorius, who holds her in conversation; Appius rivets his eyes on her.*
Num. (C.) You have heard the news?
Virg. (C.) What news? dear uncle!
Num. Step
Aside with me, I'll tell you.
[*Takes her a little farther from the Tribunal.*
App. Can it be
A mortal that I look upon?
Virg. They are safe!
I thank the gods!
App. Her eyes look up to heaven,
Like something kindred to it—rather made
To send their glances down, and fill the earth
With worship and with gratulation—What
A thrill runs up and down my veins; and all throughout me!

Ple. Now, most noble Appius——
App. Stop;
Put off the cause, I cannot hear it now!
Attend to-morrow! An oppressive closeness
Allows me not to breathe—Lictors! make clear
The ground about the Rostrum! [*Descends and approaches Claudius with precipitation.*
Claudius! Claudius!—
Marcus, go you and summon my physician
To be at home before me. [*Exit Marcus.*] Claudius!
Claudius! there! there!
Virg. (L.) You send a messenger to-night?
App. (L. C.) Paint me that smile! I never saw a smile
'Till now. My Claudius, is she not a wonder?
I know not whether in the state of girlhood
Or womanhood to call her.—'Twixt the two
She stands, as that were loth to lose her, this
To win her most impatient. The young year,
Trembling and blushing 'twixt the striving kisses
Of parting spring, and meeting summer, seems
Her only parallel!
Num. 'Tis well! I'll send
Your father word of this. But have you not
A message to Icilius?
App. Mark you, Claudius?
There is a blush!—I must possess her.
Virg. Tell him
I think upon him.—Farewell, Numitorius!
[*Exit with Servia,* R.
Num. (R.) Farewell, Virginia.
Claud. (R. C.) Master, will you tell me
The name of that young maiden?
Num. She is called
Virginia, daughter of Virginius;
A Roman citizen, and a centurion
In the army.
Claud. Thank you; she is very like
The daughter of a friend of mine. Farewell.
Num. Farewell! [*Exit,* R.
App. (L. C.) I burn, my Claudius! brain and heart!
There's not
A fibre in my body but's on fire!

With what a gait she moves! Such was not Hebe,
Or Jupiter had sooner lost his heaven,
Than changed his cup-bearer—a step like that
The rapture-glowing clouds might well bear up,
And never take for human! Find me, Claudius,
Some way to compass the possession of her.

Claud. 'Tis difficult—Her father's of repute;
The highest of his class.

App. I guessed it! (R. C.) Friends
Are ever friends, except when friends are needed.

Claud. Nay, Appius!—

App. (R.) If thou can'st not give me hope,
Be dumb!

Claud. A female agent may be used
With some success.

App. How? How?

Claud. To tamper with
That woman that attends her.

App. Set about it.

Claud. Could she but be induced to help you to
A single meeting with her.

App. Claudius! Claudius!
Effect but that!

Claud. I'll instantly about it.

App. (C.) Spare not my gold—nor stop at promises
I will fulfil them fast as thou can'st make them.
To purchase such a draught of extasy
I'd drain a kingdom!—Set about it, Claudius!
Away! I will not eat, nor drink, nor sleep,
Until I hear from thee!

Claud. (L. C.) Depend upon me!

App. I do, my Claudius, for my life—my life!

[*Exeunt, Appius,* M. D., *Claudius,* L.

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

Scene I.—*Appius's House.*

Enter Appius, L.

App. It is not love, (C.) if what I've felt before
And called by such a name, be love—a thing
That took its turn—that I could entertain,
Put off, or humour—'tis some other thing;
Or, if the same, why in some other state—
Or I am not the same—or it hath found
Some other part of sensibility
More quick, whereon to try its power, and there
Expends it all! Now, Claudius, your success?

Enter Claudius, R.

Claud. (R.) Nothing would do, yet nothing left undone!
She was not to be purchased.
App. (R. C.) Did she guess——
Claud. She could not,
So guarded was my agent; who described you
A man of power, of noble family,
And regal fortune—one that asked not what
His pleasures cost—no further made disclosure.
App. (C.) And did it nothing move her, Claudius?
Claud. (R. C.) Nothing.
The more my agent urged, the more the shrunk
And withered hag grew callous; further pressed,
And with more urgent importuning, ire
And scorn, in imprecations and invectives
Vented upon the monster (as she called him)
That would pollute her child, compelled my advocate
To drop the suit she saw was hopeless.
App. Now
Had I a friend indeed!
Claud. Has Appius need
To search for such a friend, and Claudius by him?
App. Friends ever are provisionally friends—
Friends for so far—Friends just to such a point,
And then "farewell!" friends with an understanding—
As "should the road be pretty safe"—"the sea

Not over-rough," and so on—friends of *ifs*
And *buts*—no friends!—Oh, could I find the man
Would be a simple, thorough-going friend!
Claud. I thought you had one, Appius.
App. (L. C.) So thought Appius,
Till Appius thought upon a test of friendship,
He fears he would not give unto himself,
Could he be Appius' friend.
Claud. Then Appius has
A truer friend than Appius is to Appius.
I'll give that test! [*Meet at* C., *and join hands.*
App. What! you'd remove her father
And that Icilius whom you told me of?
Claud. Count it as done.
App. My Claudius, is it true?
Can I believe it? art thou such a friend,
That, when I looked for thee to stop and leave me,
I find thee keeping with me, step by step;
And even in thy loving eagerness
Outstriding me? I do not want thee, Claudius,
To soil thy hand with their plebeian blood.
Claud. What would'st thou, then?
App. I was left guardian to thee—
Claud. Thou wast.
App. Amongst the various property
Thy father left, were many female slaves.
Claud. Well?
App. It were easy for thee, (were it not?)
To invent a tale that one of them confessed
She had sold a female infant (and of course
Thy slave) unto Virginius' wife, who passed it
Upon Virginius as his daughter, which
Supposititious offspring is this same
Virginia?
Claud. I conceive you.
App. To induce
The woman to confirm your tale, would ask
But small persuasion. Is it done?
Claud. This hour.
I know the school, my Appius, where Virginia
Pursues her studies; thither I'll repair,
And seize her as my slave at once. Do thou

Repair to thy tribunal, whither, should
Her friends molest me in the attempt, I'll bring her,
And plead my cause before thee.

App. (L.) Claudius! Claudius!
How shall I pay thee? Oh, thou noble friend!
Power, fortune, life, whate'er belongs to Appius,
Reckon as thine! Away, away, my Claudius!

[*Exeunt, Appius,* L., *Claudius,* R

Scene II.—*A Street in Rome.*

Enter Lucius, L., *meeting* Titus, Servius, *and* Cneius.

Luc. Well, masters, any news of Siccius Dentatus from the camp, how he was received by the Decemvirs?

Tit. He was received well by the Decemvirs.

Cne. It wasn't then for the love they bear him.

Tit. But they expect he'll help them to return the cuffs they have gotten from the enemy.

Ser. Do you wish for a victory?

Luc. Yes, if Dentatus wins it. 'Tis to our credit, masters—He's one of us.

Ser. And is not Spurius Oppius one of us?

Luc. He is; but he is in league with the patricians—"that is, the patrician Decemvirs." He is but half a plebeian, and that is the worse half.—"The better half he threw away when he became half a patrician." I never liked your half-and-half gentry; they generally combine the bad of both kinds, without the good of either.

Ser. Well, we shall have news presently. Your brother, Icilius, has just arrived with despatches from the camp. I met him passing through the Forum, and asked him what news he brought? He answered, none; but added, we might look for news of another kind than what we had been lately accustomed to hear.

[*A shriek without,* L.

Cne. What's that?

Tit. Look yonder, masters! See!

Ser. 'Tis Appius's client, dragging a young woman along with him.

Tit. Let us stand by each other, masters, and prevent him.

Enter Claudius, L., *dragging along* Virginia, *followed by* Servia, *and others.*

Servia. (L. C.) Help! help! help!
Luc. (C.) Let go your hold!
Claud. (C.) Stand by!
She is my slave!
Servia. His slave? Help! help! His slave?—
He looks more like a slave than she! Good masters!
Protect the daughter of Virginius!
Luc. Release the maid.
Tit. Forbear this violence.
Claud. I call for the assistance of the laws;
She is my slave.
Servia. She is my daughter, masters,
My foster-daughter; and her mother was
A free-born woman—and her father is
A citizen, a Roman—good Virginius,
As I said before—Virginius, the Centurion,
Whom all of you must know.—Help! help! I say.
You see she cannot speak to help herself;
Speak for her, Masters—help her, if you're men!
Tit. Let go your hold.
Claud. Obstruct me at your peril.
Luc. We'll make you, if you will not.
Claud. Let me pass.
Ser. Let go your hold, once more.
Claud. Good masters, patience!—
Hear me. I say—She is my slave—I wish not
To use this violence, my friends; but may not
A master seize upon his slave?—Make way,
Or such of you as are dissatisfied,
Repair with me to the Decemvir.—Come,
I only want my right.
Tit. Come on, then!
Ser. Ay,
To the Decemvir!
Servia. Run, run for Numitorius—alarm our neighbors!
—Call out Icilius's friends!—I shall go mad! Help!
help! help! [*Exeunt*, R.

Scene III.—*The Forum.*

Enter Appius, r. u. e., *preceded by Lictors.*

App. (c.) Will he succeed?—Will he attempt it?—Will he
Go thro' with it?—[*Looks out,* l.] No sign—I almost wish
He had not undertaken it; yet wish
More than I wish for life, he may accomplish
What he has undertaken. Oh! the pause
That precedes action! It is vacancy
That o'erweighs action's substance. What I fear
Is, that his courage can't withstand her tears;
That will be sure to try and succour her;
Pointing, as 'twere, to every charm, and pleading
With melting eloquence. I hear a sound
As of approaching clamour—and the rush
Of distant feet—He comes! I must prepare
For his reception. [*Ascends the Tribunal.*

Claudius *enters still holding* Virginia, *followed by* Servia, *Women and Citizens crying* "Shame!"

Claud. Do not press upon me;
Here's the Decemvir—he will satisfy you,
Whether a master has a right or not
To seize his slave when he finds her.
Servia. She is no slave
Of thine! She never was a slave. Thou slave!
To call her by that name—Ay! threaten me!
She is a free-born maid, and not a slave,
Or never was a free-born maid in Rome!
Oh! you shall dearly answer for it!
App. Peace!
What quarrel's this? Speak, those who are aggrieved.

Enter Numitorius, l.

Num. (l.) Where is Virginia? Wherefore do you hold
That maiden's hand?
Claud. Who asks the question?
Num. I! Her uncle Numitorius!
Claud. Numitorius, you think yourself her uncle—Numitorius,

No blood of yours flows in her veins, to give you
The title you would claim. Most noble Appius!
If you sit here for justice—as I think
You do, attend not to the clamour of
This man, who calls himself this damsel's *uncle.*
She is my property—was born beneath
My father's roof, whose slave her mother was,
Who (as I can establish past dispute)
Sold her an infant to Virginius' wife,
Who never had a child, and heavily
Revolved her barrenness. My slave I have found
And seized—as who that finds his own (no matter
How long soever missed) should fear to take it?
If they oppose my claim, they may produce
Their counter-proofs, and bring the cause to trial!
But till they prove mine own is not mine—
(An undertaking somewhat perilous)
Mine own I shall retain—yet giving them,
Should they demand it, what security
They please, for re-producing her.

App. Why, that
Would be but reasonable.

Num. Reasonable!
Claudius!— [*With much vehemence—recollects himself.*
He's but a mask upon the face
Of some more powerful contriver.—[*Aside.*] Appius!
My niece's father is from Rome, thou know'st,
Serving his country. Is it not unjust,
In the absence of a citizen, to suffer
His right to his own child to be disputed?
Grant us a day to fetch Virginius,
That he himself may answer this most foul
And novel suit—Meanwhile to me belongs
The custody of the maid—her uncle's house
Can better answer for her honour than
The house of Claudius. 'Tis the law of Rome,
Before a final sentence, the defendant
In his possession is not to sustain
Disturbance from the plaintiff.

Tit. A just law.

Ser. And a most reasonable demand.

All the Cits. (L.) Ay! Ay! Ay!

App. Silence, you citizens; will you restrain
Your tongues, and give your magistrate permission
To speak? The law is just—most reasonable—
I framed that law myself—I will protect
That law!
"*Til.* Most noble Appius!
"*Ser.* A most just decree!
"*All the Cits.* Ay! Ay!"
App. "Will you be silent? Will you please to wait
"For my decree, you most untractable
"And boisterous citizens! I do repeat it,
"I framed that law myself, and will protect it."
But are you, Numitorius, here defendant?
That title, none but the reputed father
Of the young woman has a right to—How
Can I commit to thee, what may appear
The plaintiff's property; and, if not his,
Still is not thine? I'll give thee till to-morrow
Ere I pass a final judgment—But the girl
Remains with Claudius, who shall bind himself
In such security as you require,
To re-produce her at the claim of him
Who calls her daughter. This is my decree.
Num. A foul decree. Shame! Shame!
Ser. Ay, a most foul decree.
Cne. A villainous decree.
Ser. Most villainous.
Servia. (c.) Good citizens, what do you with our weapons,
When you should use your own? Your hands!—your hands!—
He shall not take her from us. Gather round her,
And if he touch her, be it to his cost;
And if ye see him touch her, never more
Expect from us your titles—never more
Be husbands, brothers, lovers, at our mouths,
Or anything that doth imply the name
Of men—except such men as men should blush for.
App. Command your wives and daughters, citizens,
They quit the Forum.
Servia. They shall not command us,
That care not to protect us.

App. Take the girl,
If she is yours.
Claud. Stand by.
Virg. Oh, help me! help me!

Enter Icilius, L.

Ici. Virginia's voice! Virginia! [*Rushes to her.*
Virg. Oh, Icilius! [*Falls fainting in his arms.*
Ici. Take her, good Numitorius.
App. You had better
Withdraw, Icilius; the affair is judged.
Claud. (L. C.) I claim my slave.
Ici. (C.) Stand back, thou double slave!
Touch her, and I will tear thee, limb from limb,
Before thy master's face.—She is my wife,
My life, my heart, my heart's blood.—Touch her
With but a look——
App. My lictors, there, advance!
See that Icilius quits the Forum.—Claudius,
Secure your slave.
Ici. Lictors, a moment pause,
For your own sakes. Do not mistake these arms;
Think not the strength of any common man
Is that they feel. They serve a charméd frame,
The which a power pervades, that ten times trebles
The natural energy of each single nerve,
To sweep you down as reeds.
App. Obey my orders!
Ici. Appius! before I quit the Forum, let me
Address a word to you.
App. Be brief, then!
Ici. Is't not enough you have deprived us, Appius,
Of the two strongest bulwarks to our liberties,
Our tribunes, and our privilege of appeal
To the assembly of the people? Cannot
The honour of the Roman maids be safe?
Thou know'st this virgin is betrothed to me,
Wife of my hope—Thou shalt not cross my hope,
And I retain my life—attempt it not!—
I stand among my fellow-citizens—
His fellow-soldiers hem Virginius round,
Both men and gods are on our side; but grant

I stood alone, with naught but virtuous love
To hearten me—alone would I defeat
The execution of thy infamous
Decree! I'll quit the Forum now, but not
Alone—my love! my wife! my free-born maid—
The virgin standard of my pride and manhood,
"Of peerless motto!—rich, and fresh, and shining,
"And of device most rare and glorious"—
I'll bear off safe with me—unstained—untouched!
[*Embracing her.*

App. Your duty, Lictors! Claudius, look to your right!

Ici. True citizens!—

Tit. Down with the traitor!

Ser. Down with him—slay him!

[*The Lictors and Claudius are driven back; Claudius takes refuge at Appius's feet, who has descended, and throws up his arms as a signal to both parties to desist—whereupon the people retire a little.*

App. So friends! we thank you that you don't deprive us
Of everything; but leave your magistrates,
At least their persons, sacred—their decrees,
It seems, you value as you value straws,
And in like manner break them. Wherefore stop,
When you have gone so far? You might, methinks,
As well have killed my client at my feet,
As threaten him with death before my face!
Rise, Claudius! I perceive Icilius' aim;
He labours to restore the tribuneship
By means of a sedition. We'll not give him
The least pretence of quarrel. (R. C.) We shall wait
Virginius's arrival till to-morrow.
His friends take care to notice him—The camp's
But four hours' journey from the city. Till
To-morrow, then, let me prevail with you
To yield up something of your right, and let
The girl remain at liberty.

Claud. (R.) If they
Produce security for her appearance,
I am content.

Tit. I'll be your security.

Ser. And I.

Citizens. We'll all be your security.

[*They hold up their hands.*

Ici. My friends
And fellow-citizens, I thank you; but
Reserve your kindness for to-morrow, friends,
If Claudius still persist—To-day, I hope,
He will remain content with my security,
And that of Numitorius, for the maid's
Appearance.

App. See she do appear!—and come
Prepared to pay the laws more reverence,
As I shall surely see that they receive it.

[*Exeunt Appius, Claudius, and Lictors,* M. D.

Ici. Look up! look up! my sweet Virginia,
Look up! look up! you will see none but friends.
Oh, that such eyes should e'er meet other prospects!

Virg. Icilius! Uncle! lead me home! Icilius,
You did not think to take a slave to wife?

Ici. I thought and think to wed a free-born maid;
And thou, and thou alone, art she, Virginia!

Virg. I feel as I were so—I do not think
I am his slave! Virginius not my father!
Virginius, my dear father, not my father!
It cannot be; my life must come from him;
For, make him not my father, it will go
From me.—I could not live, an he were not
My father.

Ici. Dear Virginia, calm thy thoughts.
But who shall warn Virginius?

Num. I've ta'en care
Of that: no sooner heard I of this claim,
Than I dispatched thy brother Lucius,
Together with my son, to bring Virginius,
With all the speed they could; and cautioned them
(As he is something over quick of temper,
And might snatch justice, rather than sue for it,)
To evade communication of the cause,
And merely say his presence was required,
Till we should have him with us. Come, Virginia;
Thy uncle's house shall guard thee, till thou find'st
Within thy father's arms a citadel,
Whence Claudius cannot take thee.

Ici. He shall take
A thousand lives first
Tit. Ay, ten thousand lives.
Ici. Hear you, Virginia! Do you hear your friends?
Virg. Let him take my life first, I am content
To be his slave then—if I am his slave.
Ici. Thou art a free-born Roman maid, Virginia;
All Rome doth know thee so, Virginia—
All Rome will see thee so.
Citizens. We will! we will!
Ici. You'll meet us here to-morrow?
Citizens. All! all!
Ici. Cease not to clamour 'gainst this outrage. Tell it
In every corner of the city; and
Let no man call himself a son of Rome,
Who stands aloof when tyranny assails
Her fairest daughter. Come, Virginia,
'Tis not a private, but a common wrong;
'Tis every father's, lover's, freeman's cause;
To-morrow! fellow citizens, to-morrow!
Citizens. To-morrow! [*Exeunt, shouting,* L.

SCENE IV.—*The Camp.*

Enter S. OPPIUS *and* Q. F. VIBULANUS.

Opp. (L.) Has he set out?
Vibu. He has, my Oppius,
And never to return! His guard's instructed
To take good care of him. There's not a man
But's ten times sold to us, and of our wishes
Fully possessed. Dentatus will no more
Obstruct us in our plans. He did not like
The site of our encampment. He will find
At least the air of it was wholesome.
Opp. What
Report are they instructed to bring back?
Vibu. They fell into an ambush—He was slain.
Opp. But should the truth, by any means, come out?
Vibu. Imprison them, and secretly dispatch them,
Or ope' the dungeon doors, and let them 'scape.
Opp. I should prefer the latter method.
Vibu. Well,

That be our choice. But when it is determined
To spill blood otherwise than as it may
Be spilled, to hesitate about some drops
Is weakness, may be fatal.—Come, my friend,
Let us be seen about the camp, and ready,
With most admiring ear, to catch the tidings
Will be the wonder of all ears but ours.
Here's one anticipates us!

Enter Marcus, r.

Well, your news?

Mar. (r.) Dentatus is no more! but he has dearly sold his life. The matter has been reported as you directed. By few it is received with credence—by many with doubt; while some bold spirits stop not at muttering, but loudly speak suspicion of foul play. A party that we met, a mile beyond the lines, no sooner heard our story, than they set off to bring the body to the camp. Others have followed them. Fabius, we have your gage for safety.

Vibu. You have.—Come, let us show ourselves.—Guilt hides,
And we must wear the port of innocence,
That more than half way meets accusal.—Come.

[*Exeunt*, r.

Scene V.—*A Mountainous Pass.—The body of* Dentatus *discovered on a bier*, l. c.—*Soldiers mourning over it.—Trumpets.*

Enter Virginius, r. u. e.

Vir. (c.) Where is Dentatus? Where is the gallant soldier?
Ah, comrade! comrade! warm! yet warm! So lately
Gone, when I would have given the world, only
To say farewell to thee, or even get
A parting look! Oh, gallant, gallant soldier,
The god of war might sure have spared a head
Grown grey in serving him! My brave old comrade!
The father of the field! Thy silver locks
Other anointing should receive, than what
Their master's blood could furnish!

1*st Sol.* There has been treachery here,

Vir. What!

1*st Sol.* The slain are all our own. None of the bodies are stripped—These are all Romans. There is not the slightest trace of an enemy's retreat—And now I remember, they made a sudden halt when we came in sight of them at the foot of the mountain. Marked you not, too, with what confused haste they told their story, directed us, and hurried on to the camp?

Vir. Revenge! The Decemvirs! Ay, the Decemvirs!
For every drop of blood thou shalt have ten,
Dentatus!

Luc. [*Without*, R.] What, hoa! Virginius! Virginius!

Vir. Here! here!

Enter Lucius, R.

Luc. 'Tis well you're found, Virginius!

Vir. What makes you from the city? Look!
My Lucius, what a sight you're come to witness.
My brave old comrade! Honest Siccius!
"Siccius Dentatus, that true son of Rome,
"On whose white locks the mother looked more proudly
"Than on the raven ones of her youngest and
"Most hopeful sons, is nothing now but this,
"The sign and token of himself!" Look, comrades,
Here are the foes have slain him! Not a trace
Of any other—not a body stripped—
Our father has been murdered—We'll revenge him
Like sons! Take up the body! Bear it to
The camp; and as you move your solemn march,
Be dumb—or if you speak, be it but a word;
And be that word—Revenge!

[*The Soldiers bear off the body*, R.—*Virginius following, is stopped by Lucius.*

Luc. (L. C.) Virginius!

Vir. I did not mind thee, Lucius!
Uncommon things make common things forgot.
Hast thou a message for me, Lucius? Well!
I'll stay and hear it—but be brief; my heart
Follows my poor Dentatus.

Luc. (C.) You are wanted
In Rome.

Vir. On what account?

Luc. On your arrival
You'll learn.
Vir. How! is it something can't be told
At once! Speak out, boy! Ha! your looks are loaded
With matter—Is't so heavy that your tongue
Cannot unburden them? Your brother left
The camp on duty yesterday—hath aught
Happened to him? Did he arrive in safety?
Is he safe? Is he well?
Luc. He is both safe and well.
Vir. What then? What then? Tell me the matter, Lucius.
Luc. I have said
It shall be told you.
Vir. Shall! I stay not for
That shall, unless it be so close at hand,
It stop me not a moment.—'Tis too long
A coming. Fare you well, my Lucius. [*Going*, R.
Luc. (C.) Stay,
Virginius.—Hear me, then, with patience.
Vir. [*Returns.*] Well,
I am patient.
Luc. Your Virginia——
Vir. (R. C.) Stop, my Lucius!
I am cold in every member of my frame!
If 'tis prophetic, Lucius, of thy news,
Give me such token as her tomb would, Lucius—
I'll bear it better—silence.
Luc. You are still——
Vir. I thank thee, Jupiter! I am still a father!
Luc. You are, Virginius—yet—
Vir. What, is she sick?
Luc. No.
Vir. Neither dead nor sick! All well! No harm!
Nothing amiss! Each guarded quarter safe,
That fear may lay him down and sleep, and yet
This sounding the alarm! I swear thou tell'st
A story strangely.—Out with't! I have patience
For anything, since my Virginia lives,
And lives in health!
Luc. You are required in Rome,
To answer a most novel suit.

Vir. Whose suit?
Luc. The suit of Claudius.
Vir. Claudius!
Luc. Him that's client
To Appius Claudius, the Decemvir.
Vir. What!
That pander! Ha! Virginia! you appear
To couple them. What makes my fair Virginia
In company with Claudius? Innocence
Beside lasciviousness! His suit! What suit?
Answer me quickly!—Quickly! lest suspense,
Beyond what patience can endure, coercing,
Drive reason from his seat!
Luc. He has claimed Virginia.
Vir. Claimed her! Claimed her!
On what pretence?
Luc. He says she is the child
Of a slave of his, who sold her to thy wife.
Vir. Go on, you see I'm calm.
Luc. He seized her in
The school, and dragged her to the Forum, where
Appius was giving judgment.
Vir. Dragged her to
The Forum! Well?—I told you, Lucius,
I would be patient.
Luc. Numitorius there confronted him.
Vir. Did he not strike him dead?
True, true, I know it was in presence of
The Decemvir—Oh! had I confronted him!
Well! well! the issue—Well! (L.) o'erleap all else,
And light upon the issue! Where is she?
Luc. (R.) I was dispatched to fetch thee, ere I could learn.
Vir. The claim of Claudius—Appius's client—Ha!
I see the master cloud (C.)—this ragged one,
That lowers before, moves only in subservience
To the ascendant of the other—Jove
With its own mischief, break it, and disperse it,
And that be all the ruin! Patience! Prudence!
Nay, prudence, but no patience.—Come! a slave,
Dragged through the streets in open day! my child
My daughter! my fair daughter, in the eyes

Of Rome! Oh! I'll be patient. Come! The essence
Of my best blood in the free common ear
Condemned as vile! Oh! I'll be patient. Come,
Oh, they shall wonder—I will be so patient! [*Exeunt*, R.

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

Scene I.—*Numitorius's House.*

Virginia *discovered*, c., *supported by* Servia.

Virg. Is he not yet arrived? Will he not come?
Servia. He surely will.
Virg. He surely will! More surely
He had arrived already, had he known
How he is wanted—"They have missed him, Servia!
"Don't tell me, but I know they have, or surely
"We had not now been looking for him." Where's
My uncle?
Servia. Finding you had fallen asleep
After such watching, he went forth to hear
If there were any tidings of Virginius.
He's here.

Enter Numitorius, R.—*Virginia looks at him inquisitively for some time.*

Virg. Not come! not come! I am sure of it!
He will not come! Do you not think he'll come?
Will not my father come? What think you, uncle?
Speak to me, speak—Oh, give me any words,
Rather than what looks utter.
Num. (c.) Be composed!
I hope he'll come!
Virg. A little while ago
You were sure of it—from certainty to hope
Is a poor step; you hope he'll come—One hope,
One little hope to face a thousand fears!
"Do you not know he'll come! Oh, uncle, wherefore
"Do you not know he'll come? Had I been you,
"I had made sure of it.

" *Num.* All has been done
" That could be done.
Virg. " Poor all that does so little!
" One would imagine little needs be done
" To bring a father to the succour of
" His child!" 'Tis near the time!
Num. It is indeed!
Virg. Must I go forth with you? Must I again
Be dragged along by Claudius as his slave,
And none again to succour me? Icilius!
Icilius! Does your true betrothéd wife
Call on you, and you hear not? My Icilius!
Am I to be your wife or Claudius' slave?
Where—where are you, Icilius?

Enter Icilius, r.

Ici. My Virginia!
What's to be done, my friend? 'tis almost time.
[*To Numitorius.*
Virg. I hear what you are saying—it is time—
" Oh, who could have believed it, that Icilius
" Should ever say 'twas time to yield me to
" Another's claim."—And will you give me up?
Can you devise no means to keep me from him?
Could we not fly?
[*Icilius looks earnestly at Numitorius, who fixes his eyes steadfastly on the ground: Icilius droops his head.*
I see!—Your pledge
Must be redeemed, although it cost you your
Virginia.
Vir. [*Without,* r.] Is she here?
Virg. Ah!

Enter Virginius r.

Vir. My child! my child!
[*Virginia rushes into her father's arms.*
Virg. I am! I feel I am! I know I am!
My father! my dear father! " I despaired
" Of seeing you!" You're come! and come in time.
And, Oh! how much the more in time, when hope
Had given you up. " Oh! welcome, welcome foot,
" Whose wishéd step is heard when least expected!"
Vir. (c.) Brother! Icilius! thank you! thank you—All

Has been communicated to me. Ay!
And would they take thee from me? Let them try it!
You've ta'en your measures well—I scarce could pass
Along, so was I checked by loving hands
Ready to serve me. Hands with hearts in them!
So thou art Claudius' slave? And if thou art,
I'm surely not thy father! Blistered villain!
You have warned our neighbours, have you not, to attend
As witnesses? To be sure you have. A fool
To ask the question! Dragged along the streets, too!
'Twas very kind in him to go himself
And fetch thee—such an honour should not pass
Without acknowledgment. I shall return it
In full! In full!

Num. (R. C.) Pray you, be prudent, brother.

Virg. (C.) Dear father, be advised—Will you not, father?

Vir. I never saw you look so like your mother
In all my life!

Virg. You'll be advised, dear father?

Vir. It was her soul—her soul, that played just then
About the features of her child, and lit them
Into the likeness of her own. When first
She placed thee in my arms—I recollect it
As a thing of yesterday!—she wished, she said,
That it had been a man. I answered her,
It was the mother of a race of men,
And paid her for thee with a kiss. Her lips
Are cold now—could they but be warmed again,
How they would clamour for thee!

Virg. My dear father,
You do not answer me! Will you not be advised?

Vir. I will not take him by the throat and strangle him!
But I could do it! I could do it! Fear not:
I will not strike while any head I love
Is in the way. It is not now a time
To tell thee—but, would'st thou believe it!—honest
Siccius Dentatus has been murdered by them.

Ici. Murdered!

Num. Dentatus murdered!

Virg. Oh! how much
Have we to fear.

Vir. We have the less to fear.
I spread the news at every step—A fire
Is kindled, that will blaze at but a breath
Into the fiercest flame!
Num. 'Tis time. Let's haste
To the Forum. [*Going*, R.
Vir. Let the Forum wait for us!
Put on no show of fear, when villainy
Would wrestle with you! It can keep its feet
Only with cowards! I shall walk along
Slowly and calmly, with my daughter thus
In my hand: though with another kind of gripe
Than that which Claudius gave her. Well, I say,
I'll walk along thus, in the eyes of Rome.
Go you before, and what appeal soe'er
You please, make you to rouse up friends. For me,
I shall be mute—my eloquence is here—
Her tears—her youth—her innocence—her beauty!
If orators like these can't move the heart,
Tongues surely may be dumb.
Ici. (L. C.) A thousand hearts
Have spoke already in her cause!
Vir. Come on!
Fear not! it is your father's grasp you feel.
Oh, he'll be strong as never man was, that
Will take thee from it. Come, Virginia;
We trust our cause to Rome and to the gods!
[*Leads her off*, R. *Icilius, &c., follow.*

Scene II.—*The Forum.*

Enter Appius *and* Lictors, R. U. E.

App. See you keep back the people! Use your fasces
With firmer hands, or hearts. Your hands are firm
Enough, would but your hearts perform their office,
"And leave your hands at liberty, not hang
"Upon them with unseemly fears and clamours!"
Look to it! "Time! hadst thou the theme that I have
"For speed, thou would'st not move this cripple's gait:
"But there's no urging thee, and thou wast ever
"Dull fellow traveller to young Impatience,
"Dragging him back upon the road he pants
"To run, but cannot find without thee."

Enter Marcus, r.

Well?

Marc. (r.) News has arrived, that speaks as if Dentatus
Was murdered by the order of your colleagues!
There's not a face I meet but lowers with it:
The streets are filled with thronging groups, that, as
You pass, grow silent, and look sullen round on you,
Then fall again to converse.

App. (c.) 'Tis ill timed.

Marc. What say you, Appius?

App. Murder's ill timed, I say,
Happen when 'twill; but now is most ill timed,
When Rome is in a ferment, on account
Of Claudius, and this girl he calls his slave;
"For come when evil will, or how it will,
"All's laid to our account!" Look out and see
If Claudius be approaching yet.

[*Marcus retires into back ground.*

"My wish,
"Like an officious friend, comes out of time
"To tell me of success. I had rather far
"It had miscarried—they run high enough;
"They wanted not this squall on squall to raise them
"Above their present swell—the waves run high
"Enough, through which we steer:—but such a haven,
"If won, can never be too dearly won!"

Marc. [*Advancing.*] Claudius is here!

Enter Claudius, l.

App. Well, Claudius, are the forces
At hand?

Claud. They are, and timely, too; the people
Are in unwonted ferment.

App. I have heard
Word has arrived of old Dentatus' death;
Which, as I hear, and wonder not to hear it,
The mutinous citizens lay to our account.

Claud. That's bad enough; yet——

App. Ha! what's worse?

Claud. 'Tis best
At once to speak what you must learn at last,
Yet last of all would learn.

App. Virginius!
Claud. Yes!
He has arrived in Rome.
Marc. They are coming, Appius.
Claud. Fly, Marcus, hurry down the forces! [*Exit Marcus*, R.] Appius,
Be not o'erwhelmed!
App. There's something awes me at
The thought of looking on her father!
Claud. Look
On her, my Appius! Fix your gaze upon
The treasures of her beauty, nor avert it
Till they are thine! Haste! Your tribunal! Haste!

APPIUS *ascends the tribunal.—Enter*, L., NUMITORIUS, ICILIUS, LUCIUS, CITIZENS, VIRGINIUS *leading his Daughter*, SERVIA, *and* CITIZENS.—*A dead silence prevails.—Virginius and Daughter stand* L.

Vir. Does no one speak? I am defendant here?
Is silence my opponent? Fit opponent
To plead a cause too foul for speech! What brow
Shameless, gives front to this most valiant cause,
That tries its prowess 'gainst the honour of
A girl, yet lacks the wit to know, that they
Who cast off shame, should likewise cast off fear!
"And on the verge o' the combat wants the nerve
"To stammer forth the signal?"
App. You had better,
Virginius, wear another kind of carriage:
This is not of the fashion that will serve you.
Vir. (C.) [*Having left Virg.* L. *with Icilius.*] The fashion, Appius! Appius Claudius, tell me
The fashion it becomes a man to speak in,
Whose property in his own child—the offspring
Of his own body, near to him as is
His hand, his arm—yea, nearer—closer far,
Knit to his heart—I say, who has his property
In such a thing, the very self of himself,
Disputed—and I'll speak so, Appius Claudius:
I'll speak so—Pray you, tutor me!
App. Stand forth,
Claudius! If you lay claim to any interest

In the question now before us, speak! If not,
Bring on some other cause.

Claud. (R. C.) Most noble Appius—

Vir. And are you the man
That claims my daughter for his slave?—Look at me,
And I will give her to thee.

Claud. She is mine, then:
Do I not look at you?

Vir. Your eye does, truly,
But not your soul.—I see it through your eye,
Shifting and shrinking—turning every way
To shun me. "You surpise me, that your eye,
"So long the bully of its master, knows not
"To put a proper face upon a lie,
"But gives the port of impudence to falsehood,
"When it would pass it off for truth." Your soul
Dares as soon show its face to me!—Go on,
I had forgot; the fashion of my speech
May not please Appius Claudius.

Claud. I demand
Protection of the Decemvir!

App. You shall have it.

Vir. Doubtless!

App. Keep back the people, Lictors! What's
Your plea? You say the girl's your slave—Produce
Your proofs.

Claud. My proof is here, which, if they can,
Let them confront. The mother of the girl——

[*Virginius about to speak, is withheld by Numitorius.*

Num. (L. C.) Hold, brother! Hear them out, or suffer me
To speak.

Vir. (L. C.) Man, I must speak, or else go mad!
And if I do go mad, what then will hold me
From speaking? "Were't not better, brother, think you,
"To speak and not go mad, than to go mad,
"And then to speak?" She was thy sister, too!
Well, well, speak thou.—I'll try, and if I can,
Be silent. [*Retires.*

Num. Will she swear she is her child?

Vir. [*Starting forward.*] To be sure she will—a most wise question that!

Is she not his slave? Will his tongue lie for him—
Or his hand steal—or the finger of his hand
Beckon, or point, or shut, or open for him?
To ask him if she'll swear!—Will she walk or run,
Sing, dance, or wag her head; do anything
That is most easy done? She'll as soon swear!
What mockery it is to have one's life
In jeopardy by such a bare-faced trick!
Is it to be endured? I do protest
Against her oath!

App. No law in Rome, Virginius,
Seconds you. If she swear the girl's her child,
The evidence is good, unless confronted
By better evidence. Look you to that,
Virginius. I shall take the woman's oath.

Virg. Icilius!

Ici. Fear not, love; a thousand oaths
Will answer her.

App. [*To the Slave*, L.] You swear the girl's your child,
And that you sold her to Virginius' wife,
Who passed her for her own—Is that your oath?

Slave. [*Coming round to the front of the Tribunal.*] It is my oath.

App. Your answer now, Virginius.

Vir. Here it is! [*Brings Virginia forward*, C.
Is this the daughter of a slave? I know
'Tis not with men, as shrubs and trees, that by
The shoot you know the rank and order of
The stem. Yet who from such a stem would look
For such a shoot? My witnesses are these—
The friends and relatives of Numitoria,
Who saw her, ere Virginia's birth, sustain
The burden which a mother bears, nor feels
The weight, with longing for the sight of it.
Here are the ears that listened to her sighs
In nature's hour of labour, which subsides
In the embrace of joy—the hands, that when
The day first looked upon the infant's face,
And never looked so pleased, helped them up to it,
And blessed her for a blessing—Here, the eyes
That saw her lying at the generous
And sympathetic fount, that at her cry

Sent forth a stream of liquid living pearl,
To cherish her enamelled veins. The lie
Is most unfruitful, then, that takes the flower—
The very flower our bed connubial grew—
To prove its barrenness! Speak for me, friends:
Have I not spoken the truth?

Women & Citizens. You have, Virginius.

App. Silence! keep silence there.—No more of that!
You're very ready for a tumult, citizens.
[*Troops appear behind.*
Lictors, make way to let these troops advance!
We have had a taste of your forbearance, masters,
And wish not for another.

Vir. Troops in the Forum!

App. Virginius, have you spoken?

Vir. If you have heard me,
I have; if not, I'll speak again.

App. You need not,
Virginius; I have evidence to give,
Which, should you speak a hundred times again,
Would make your pleading vain.

Vir. Your hand, Virginia!
Stand close to me. [*Aside.*

App. My conscience will not let me
Be silent. 'Tis notorious to you all,
That Claudius' father, at his death, declared me
The guardian of his son—This cheat has long
Been known to me. I know the girl is not
Virginius' daughter.

Vir. Join your friends, Icilius,
And leave Virginia to my care. [*Aside,* L. C.

"*App.* The justice
"I should have done my client, unrequired,
"Now cited by him, how shall I refuse?"

Vir. Don't tremble, girl, don't tremble. [*Aside.*

App. Virginius,
I feel for you; but, though you were my father,
The majesty of justice should be sacred—
Claudius must take Virginia home with him!

Vir. And if he must, I should advise him, Appius,
To take her home in time, before his guardian
Complete the violation, which his eyes

Already have begun. [*Turning to Citizens.*] Friends! fellow citizens!
Look not on Claudius—Look on your Decemvir!
He is the master claims Virginia!
The tongues that told him she was not my child,
Are these—the costly charms he cannot purchase,
Except by making her the slave of Claudius,
His client, his purveyor, that caters for
His pleasures—markets for him—picks, and scents,
And tastes, that he may banquet—serves him up
His sensual feast, and is not now ashamed,
In the open, common street, before your eyes—
Frighting your daughters' and your matrons' cheeks
With blushes they ne'er thought to meet—to help him
To the honour of a Roman maid! my child!
Who now clings to me, as you see, as if
This second Tarquin had already coiled
His arms around her. Look upon her, Romans!
Befriend her! succour her! see her not polluted
Before her father's eyes!—He is but one.
Tear her from Appius and his Lictors, while
She is unstained—Your hands! your hands! your hands!

Citizens. They are yours, Virginius.

App. Keep the people back—
Support my Lictors, soldiers! Seize the girl,
And drive the people back.

Ici. (L.) Down with the slaves!

[*The people make a show of resistance, but, upon the advancing of the Soldiers, retreat, and leave Icilius, Virginius and his Daughter, &c. in the hands of Appius and his party.*

Deserted!—Cowards! Traitors! "Let me free
"But for a moment! I relied on you;
"Had I relied upon myself alone,
"I had kept them still at bay! I kneel to you—
"Let me but loose a moment, if 'tis only
"To rush upon your swords!"

Vir. Icilius, peace!
You see how 'tis, we are deserted, left
Alone by our friends, surrounded by our enemies,
Nerveless and helpless.

App. Away with him!

Ici. Virginia! Tyrant! My Virginia!
App. Away with him! [*Icilius is taken aside.*
Separate them, Lictors!
Vir. Let them forbear awhile, I pray you, Appius:
It is not very easy. Though her arms
Are tender, yet the hold is strong, by which
She grasps me, Appius—Forcing them will hurt them,
They'll soon unclasp themselves. Wait but a little—
You know you're sure of her!
App. I have not time
To idle with thee, give her to my Lictors.
Vir. Appius, I pray you, wait! If she is not
My child, she hath been like a child to me
For fifteen years. If I am not her father
I have been like a father to her, Appius,
For even such a time. "They that have lived
"So long a time together, in so near
"And dear society, may be allowed
"A little time for parting." Let me take
The maid aside, I pray you, and confer
A moment with her nurse; perhaps she'll give me
Some token, will unloose a tie so twined
And knotted round my heart, that if you break it,
My heart breaks with it.
App. Have your wish. Be brief!
Lictors, look to them.
Virg. Do you go from me!
Do you leave! Father! Father!
Vir. No, my child;
No, my Virginia—come along with me.
Virg. Will you not leave me? Will you take me with you?
Will you take me home again? Oh, bless you, bless you!
My father! my dear father! Art thou not
My father? [*Virginius, perfectly at a loss what to do, looks anxiously around the Forum; at length his eye falls on a butcher's stall,* L., *with a knife upon it.*
Vir. This way, my child—No, no! I am not going
To leave thee, my Virginia! I'll not leave thee.
App. Keep back the people, soldiers! Let them not
Approach Virginius! Keep the people back!
[*Virginius secures the knife in the folds of his toga.*

Well, have you done?
Vir. Short time for converse, Appius;
But I have.
App. I hope you are satisfied.
Vir. I am—
I am—that she is my daughter!
App. Take her, Lictors! [*Virginia shrieks, and falls half dead upon her father's shoulder.*
Vir. Another moment, pray you. Bear with me
A little—'Tis my last embrace. 'Twont try
Your patience beyond bearing, if you're a man!
Lengthen it as I may, I cannot make it
Long! My dear child! My dear Virginia! [*Kissing her.*
There is one only way to save thine honour—
'Tis this!— [*Stabs her and draws out the knife.—She falls and dies,* L.
Lo! Appius; with this innocent blood,
I do devote thee to th' infernal gods!
Make way there!
App. Stop him! Seize him!
Vir. If they dare
To tempt the desperate weapon that is maddened
With drinking my daughter's blood, why, let them: Thus
It rushes in amongst them. Way there! Way!
[*Exit through the Soldiers.*

"*Enter* HONORIUS *and* VALERIUS.

"*Hon.* What tumult's this?—
"The fair Virginia
"Killed by her father's hand, to save her from
"The lust of Appius Claudius? Most foul cause,
"That makes so dark a deed look fair!
"*App.* Remove
"The body, Lictors.
"*Ici.* At the peril of
"Their lives! Death is abroad, at work, and most
"In earnest when with such a feat as this
"He opens his exploits!
"*App.* Obey me, slaves!
"*Hon.* Defend the body, freemen. There's a spark
"Remaining still, which, though not strong enough
"To light it up with its own beauteous life,

"May yet rekindle liberty, and save
"Expiring Rome!
"*Cits.* It shall not be removed!
"*App.* Seize it, I say!
"*Val.* Back, slaves! Give place to freemen!
"[*A tumult ensues; the people deprive the Lictors of "their fasces, and drive them, with the Soldiers, with "Appius Claudius, &c., off the Stage, then return "shouting.*
"*Ici.* Ay, shout, and shout: a far more glorious cause
"Called for your voices, and you had not then
"The breath to whisper. How that ear had thanked you
"Had you as tender been of the jewel of
"Its precious sense, as of the empty casket!
"*Hon.* A litter, citizens, to lift the body,
"And bear it through the streets; the spectacle
"Will fill all eyes with tears, all hearts with fire!
"*Ici.* No hand but mine shall touch it: I will be
"Its living bier.
"*Hon.* Icilius, listen to me!
"Thou art not now thyself, and knowest not
"There is a sweeter strain than that of grief—
"Revenge, that drowns it. Suffer us to bear
"Thy bride along the streets; a second, but
"Unstained Lucretia, buying, with her blood,
"The life of Rome and freedom!
"*Ici.* Rome and freedom!
"There is your ransom! such a costly one—
"Oh, you are dear, to be so dearly won! [*Exeunt.*"

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

Scene I.—*A Street.*

Enter Appius, L.

App. I do abjure all further league with them:
They have most basely yielded up their power,
"And compromised their glory. Had they died

"In their high seats, they had lived demi-gods;
"But now they live to die like basest men!"
Power gone, life follows! (C.) Well! 'tis well we know
The worst! (R.) The worst?—The worst is yet to come,
And if I err not, hither speeds a messenger
Whose heel it treads upon.

Enter VIBULANUS, *hastily, and other Decemvirs, with* MARCUS, L.

Vibu. Honorius and Valerius are elected
To the Consulate.—Virginius is made Tribune—
"*App.* No doubt they'd fill their offices, when ours
"Were laid so poorly down.—You have acted wisely!
"*Vibu.* Who could resist Virginius, raving at
"The head of the revolted troops, with all
"The commons up in arms? Waste not dear time!
"Look to your safety, Appius. 'Tis resolved
"To cite you instantly before the Consuls.
"*App.* Look to my safety, say you? You would bid
"A man that's tumbling from a precipice
"A hundred fathoms high, and midway down,
"Look to his safety! What has he to snatch at?
"Air!—E'en so much have I.
"*Vibu.* Withdraw awhile
"From Rome. We shall recal you with applause
"And honours.
"*App.* Yes! you saw me on the brink—
"Beheld it giving way beneath my feet—
"And saw me tottering o'er the hideous leap,
"Whose sight sent round the brain with maddening whirl,
"With but a twig to stay me, which you cut,
"Because it was your friend that hung by it—
"Most kindly.
"*Vibu.* Nay," employ the present time
In looking to your safety—"that secured,
"Reproach us as you will."
App. I am in your hands,
Lead me which way you please.
Ici. [*Without.*] Hold! Stand!

Enter ICILIUS, *with* HONORIUS *and* VALERIUS *as Consuls*, NUMITORIUS *and* LICTORS, L.

Did I not tell you 'twas the tyrant? Look,

Was I not right? I felt that he was present,
Ere mine eye told it me.—You are our prisoner.
App. On what pretence, Icilius?
Ici. Ask of poor
Virginius, tottering between despair
And madness, as he seeks the home where once
He found a daughter!
App. I demand due time
To make up my defence.
Ici. Demand due time!
Appius!—Assign the cause why you denied
A Roman maid, of free condition,
Her liberty provisionally, while
Her plea remained unjudged. No answer, Appius?
Lictors, lay hold upon him—to prison with him!
Look to him well. To prison with the tyrant!

[*Exeunt Appius and Lictors,* R., *Icilius and Numitorius,* L.

Vibu. Let all his friends, that their own safety prize,
Solicit straight for his enlargement; doff
Their marks of station, and to the vulgar eye
Disguise it with the garb of mourning: 'twill
Conciliate the crowd.—We know them well:
But humour them, they are water soon as fire!

[*Exeunt severally.*

Scene II.—*Virginius's House.*

Enter Lucius *and* Servia, L.

Luc. (C.) Is he not yet come home?
Servia. (C.) Not since her death.
I dread his coming home, good Lucius.
Luc. (L.) A step! 'Tis Numitorius and Virginius.
Servia. Gods! how he looks!—See, Lucius, how he looks!

Enter Virginius, *attended by* Numitorius *and others,* L.

Vir. (C.) 'Tis ease! 'tis ease! I am content! 'Tis peace,
'Tis anything that is most soft and quiet.
And after such a dream!—I want my daughter;
Send me my daughter!

Num. Yes, his reason's gone.
Scarce had he come in sight of his once sweet
And happy home, ere with a cry he fell
As one struck dead.—When to himself he came,
We found him as you see. How is it, brother?
Vir. How should it be, but well? Our cause is good.
Think you Rome will stand by, and see a man
Robbed of his child? We are bad enough, but yet
They should not so mistake us. "We are slaves,
"But not yet monsters."—Call my daughter to me.
What keeps her thus? I never stepped within
The threshold yet, without her meeting me
With a kiss. She's very long a-coming. Call her!
Num. Icilius comes! See, my Icilius, see!

Enter Icilius, L.

Vir. Come, come, make ready. Brother, you and he
Go on before: I'll bring her after you.
Ici. Ha!
Num. My Icilius, what a sight is there!
Virginius' reason is a wreck, so stripped
And broken by wave and wind, you scarce
Would know it was the gallant bark you saw
Riding so late in safety!
Ici. [*Taking Virginius's hand.*] Father! Father!
That art no more a father!
Vir. Ha! what wet
Is this upon my hand? a tear, boy! Fie,
For shame! Is that the weapon you would guard
Your bride with? First assay what steel can do!
Num. Not a tear has blessed his eye since her death!
No wonder.
The fever of his brain, that now burns out,
Has drunk the source of sorrow's torrents dry.
Ici. You would not have it otherwise? 'Twas fit
The bolt that struck the sole remaining branch,
And blasted it, should set the trunk on fire!
Num. If we could make him weep——
Ici. (L.) I have that will make him,
If aught will do it. 'Tis her urn. 'Twas that
Which first drew tears from me. I'll fetch it. But
I cannot think you wise, to wake a man

Who's at the mercy of a tempest. Better
You suffer him to sleep it through. [*Exit*, L.
Vir. Gather your friends together: tell them of
Dentatus' murder. Screw the chord of rage
To the topmost pitch. Mine own is not mine own!
[*Laughs.*
That's strange enough. Why does he not dispute
My right to my own flesh, and tell my heart
Its blood is not its own? He might as well. [*Laughs.*
But I want my child.

Enter LUCIUS, L.

Luc. Justice will be defeated!
Vir. (C.) Who says that?
He lies in the face of the gods! She is immutable,
Immaculate, and immortal! And though all
The guilty globe should blaze, she will spring up
Through the fire, and soar above the crackling pile,
With not a downy feather ruffled by
Its fierceness!
Num. (L. C.) He is not himself! What new
Oppression comes to tell us to our teeth,
We only mocked ourselves to think the days
Of thraldom past?
Luc. The friends of Appius
Beset the people with solicitations.
The fickle crowd, that change with every change,
Begin to doubt and soften. Every moment
That's lost, a friend is lost. Appear among
Your friends, or lose them!
Num. Lucius, you
Remain and watch Virginius.
[*Exit*, L. *followed by all but Lucius and Servia.*
Vir. You remember,
Don't you, nurse?
Servia. What, Virginius?
Vir. That she nursed
The child herself. "Inquire among your gossips
"Which of them saw it; and, with such of them
"As can avouch the fact, without delay,
"Repair to the Forum." Will she come or not?
I'll call myself!—She will not dare!—Oh, when

Did my Virginia dare—Virginia!
Is it a voice, or nothing, answers me?
I hear a sound so fine—there's nothing lives
'Twixt it and silence. "Such a slender one
"I've heard, when I have talked with her in fancy!
"A phantom sound!" Aha! She is not here!
They told me she was here: they have deceived me·
And Appius was not made to give her up,
But keeps her, and effects his wicked purpose,
While I stand talking here, and ask you if
My daughter is my daughter! Though a legion
Sentried that brothel, which he calls his palace,
I'd tear her from him!

Luc. Hold, Virginius! Stay!
Appius is now in prison.

Vir. With my daughter!
He has secured her there! Ha! has he so?
Gay office for a dungeon! Hold me not,
Or I will dash you down, and spoil you for
My keeper. My Virginia, struggle with him!
Appal him with thy shrieks; ne'er faint, ne'er faint.
I am coming to thee! I am coming to thee!

[*Rushes out* L., *followed by Lucius, Servia, and others.*

SCENE III.—*A Dungeon.*

APPIUS *discovered.*

App. From the palace to the dungeon is a road
Trod oft, not oft retrod. What hope have I
To pace it back again? I know of none.
I am as one that's dead! "The dungeon, that
"Encloses fallen greatness, may as well
"Be called its tomb." I am as much the carcass
Of myself, as if the string were taken from
My neck. Their hands long for the office. Oh,
'Tis worth the half of a plebeian's life
To get his greasy fingers on the throat
Of a patrician! But I'll baulk them. Come!
Appius shall have an executioner
No less illustrious than himself.

[*He is on the point of swallowing poison, when* VIBULANUS *enters,* R.

Who's there?
Vibu. Your friend!
App. My Vibulanus!
Vibu. Appius, what
Was that you hid in such confusion as
I entered?
App. 'Tis a draught for life, which, swallowed,
She relishes so richly, that she cares not
If she ne'er drink again! Here's health to you!
Vibu. Not out of such a cup as that, my Appius.
"Despair, that bids you drink it, as the cure
"Of cankered life, but lies to you, and turns
"Your eyes from hope, that even now stands ready
"With outstretched arms, to rush to your embrace."
Your friends are busy for you with your foes—
Your foes become your friends. Where'er a frown
Appears against you, nothing's spared to make
The wearer doff it, and put up a smile
In its stead. "Your colleague Oppius is in prison.
"Your client, too. Their harm's your safety: it
"Distracts the appetite o' the dogs. They drop
"The morsel they took up before, as soon
"As a new one's thrown to them."
App. Thou giv'st me life
Indeed!
Vibu. That I may give thee life indeed,
I'll waste no longer time with thee; "for that
"Already taken to assure thee of
"Thy fast reviving fortunes, cheats them of
"The aid should help to re-establish them."
Farewell, my Appius! If my absence takes
A friend from thee, it leaves one with thee—Hope!
[*Exit*, R.
App. And I will clasp it to me! Never friend
Made sweeter promises. But snatch me from
Beneath the feet of the vile herd, that's now
Broke loose and roams at large, I'll show them who
They'd trample on. "Hope! Hope! They say of thee,
"Thou art a friend that promises, but cares not
"To keep his word. This once keep thine with Appius,
"And he will give thee out so true a tongue,
"Thy word is bond enough!"—At liberty!

Again at liberty! Oh, give me power
As well, for every minute of my thraldom
I'll pick a victim from the common herd
Shall groan his life in bondage. "Liberty!
"'Tis triumph, power, dominion, every thing!"
Are ye not open yet, ye servile gates?
Let fall your chains, and push your bolts aside!
It is your past and future lord commands you!
Vir. (*Rushing in*, R.) Give me my daughter!
App. Ha!
Vir. My child! my daughter!
My daughter! my Virginia! Give her me!
App. Thy daughter!
Vir. (c.) Ay! Deny that she is mine,
And I will strangle thee, unless the lie
Should choke thee first.
App. Thy daughter!
Vir. Play not with me!
Provoke me not! Equivocate, and lo!
Thou sport'st with fire. I am wild, distracted, mad!
I am all a flame—a flame! I tell thee once
For all, I want my child, and I will have her;
So give her to me.
App. Caged with a madman! Hoa!
Without, there!
Vir. Not a step thou stirr'st from hence,
Till I have found my child. "Attempt that noise
"Again, and I will stop the vent, that not
"A squeak shall pass it. There are plugs for you,
"Will keep it air-tight. [*Shows his fingers.*]" Please you, give me back
My daughter.
App. In truth she is not here, Virginius;
Or I would give her to thee.
Vir. Would? Ay, should!
Though would were would not. Do you say, indeed,
She is not here? You nothing know of her?
App. Nothing, Virginius! good Virginius, nothing.
Vir. How if I thrust my hand into your breast,
And tore your heart out, and confronted it
With your tongue? I'd like it. Shall we try it? Fool!

Are not the ruffians leagued? The one would swear
To the tale o' the other.
App. By the gods, Virginius,
Your daughter is not in my keeping.
Vir. Well,
Then I must seek her elsewhere. I did dream
That I had murdered her—'Tis false! 'twas but
A dream—She isn't here, you say—Well! well!
Then I must go and seek her elsewhere—Yet
She's not at home—and where else should I seek her,
But there or here? Here! here! here! Yes, I say,
But there or here—I tell you I must find her—
She must be here, or what do you here? What,
But such a wonder of rich beauty could
Deck out a dungeon, so as to despoil
A palace of its tenant? Art thou not
The tyrant Appius? Did'st thou not decree
My daughter to be Claudius' slave, who gave her
To his master? Have you not secured her here
To compass her dishonour, ere her father
Arrives to claim her?
App. No.
Vir. Do you tell me so?
Vile tyrant! Think you, shall I not believe
My own eyes before your tongue? Why, there she is!
There at your back—her locks dishevelled, and
Her vestment torn! Her cheeks all faded with
Her pouring tears, "as flowers with too much rain!"
Her form no longer kept and treasured up
"By her maiden-pride, like a rich casket, cast
"Aside, neglected, and forgot, because
"The richer gem was shrined in it is lost!"
Villain! is this a sight to show a father?
And have I not a weapon to requite thee?
[*Searches about his clothes.*
Ha! here are ten!
App. Keep down your hands! Help! help!
Vir. No other look but that! Look on! look on!
It turns my very flesh to steel—Brave girl!
Keep thine eye fixed—let it not wink—Look on!
[*Exeunt, struggling,* L.

Enter, R., NUMITORIUS, ICILIUS, LUCIUS, GUARD, *and* SOLDIER.

Num. Not here!
Luc. Is this the dungeon? Appius is not here,
Nor yet Virginius. You have sure mistaken.
Guard. This is the dungeon—Here Virginius entered.
Num. Yet is not here! Hush! The abode of death
Is just as silent. Gods! should the tyrant take
The father's life, in satisfaction for
The deed that robbed him of the daughter's charms—
Hush! hark! A groan! There's something stirs.
Luc. 'Tis this way!
Num. Come on! Protect him, gods, or pardon me,
If with my own hand I revenge his death. [*Exeunt*, L.

SCENE IV.—*Another Dungeon.*—VIRGINIUS *discovered on one knee, with* APPIUS *lying dead before him.*

Enter NUMITORIUS, ICILIUS, *with the Urn of Virginia, and* LUCIUS.

Num. What's here? Virginius! with the tyrant prostrate and dead!
Luc. His senses are benumbed; there is no adit to his mind, by which our words can reach it. Help to raise him: the motion may recal perception.
Num. His eye is not so death-like fixed: it moves a little.
Luc. Speak to him, Numitorius; he knows your voice the best.
Num. Virginius!
Luc. I think he hears you; speak again.
Num. Virginius!
Vir. Ah! [*Rises and comes forward, supported by Numitorius and Lucius.*
Luc. That sigh has burst the spell which held him.
Num. Virginius! my dear brother!
Vir. Lighter! lighter! My heart is ten times lighter! What a load it has heaved off! Where is he? I thought I had done it.
Num. Virginius!

Vir. Well, who are you? What do you want? I'll answer what I've done.

Num. Do you not know me, brother? Speak, Icilius, try if he knows you.

Ici. (R.) Virginius!

Num. Try again.

Ici. Virginius!

Vir. [*Sinking.*] That voice—that voice—I know that voice!

It minds me of a voice was coupled with it,
And made such music, once to hear it was
Enough to make it ever after be
Remembered! [*Icilius places the Urn in his right hand.*] What's this?

Ici. Virginia!

DISPOSITION OF THE CHARACTERS AT THE FALL OF THE CURTAIN.

[*Virginius looks alternately at Icilius and the Urn—looks at Numitorius and Lucius—seems particularly struck by his mourning—looks at the Urn again—bursts into a passion of tears, and exclaims,* "Virginia!"—*Falls on Icilius's neck. Curtain drops.*

THE END.

No. XXVI.

MODERN STANDARD DRAMA.

EDITED BY EPES SARGENT,

AUTHOR OF "VELASCO, A TRAGEDY," &c.

THE

KING OF THE COMMONS.

A Play

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY REV. JAMES WHITE.

WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS, CAST OF CHARACTERS, COSTUMES, RELATIVE POSITIONS, &c.

AS PLAYED AT THE PRINCESS'S THEATRE, LONDON, AND THE PARK THEATRE, NEW YORK.

NEW YORK:

WILLIAM TAYLOR & CO., No. 2 ASTOR HOUSE.

PHILADELPHIA—73 DOCK STREET, OPPOSITE EXCHANGE BUILDING.

BALTIMORE—JARVIS BUILDINGS, NORTH STREET.

BOSTON:—REDDING AND COMPANY, 8 STATE STREET.

1846.

PRICE 12 1-2 CENTS.

EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION.

A WRITER in Blackwood's Magazine, who was present at the first representation of this play, pronounces it "one of the most successful dramas which has been produced for a long time upon the stage"; and adds: "our own judgment might possibly have been swayed by partiality—not so that of the thousands who have since witnessed its repeated and successful representation."

The "King of the Commons" was first performed the 20th May, 1846, at the Princess's Theatre, London. The author, James White, a Scottish clergyman, was known to the literary world by his play of the "Earl of Gowrie," which, though much praised for its dramatic promise, had not been written for the stage, and has never been performed. The present piece, as we learn from the concurrent testimony of the critics, was eminently successful. The manly courage, chivalrous gallantry, and gusty passions of James, however contradicted by historical statements, tell capitally on the stage, and well suited Macready's fitful, wayward, sentimental style of acting. He was received with deafening applause in the part, which is somewhat long and arduous, requiring great energy and variety of temperament. The play was handsomely put upon the stage; and all the characters, with the exception of *Mungo*, were well sustained. Mr. Ryder was respectable in *Sir Adam Weir;* Mr. Leigh Murray, pathetic and spirited in *Malcolm;* Mr. Cooper, blunt and manly in *Buckie;* and Mr. Compton irresistibly funny in *Laird Small;* while for Mrs. Sterling, "it must be said she was nothing less than excellent in *Madeleine*." The scene between *Seton* and the *King* in the fourth act, where the former is accused of treason, and exculpated by the very document that is brought to overwhelm him, commanded the warmest applause of the crowded audience. The last act also went off with spirit;

although the *denouement* is rather too obvious throughout. On the fall of the curtain, Mr. Macready was called for, and cheered with shouts of congratulation; and then "some noisy persons persevered in bawling for the author, till he was compelled to shew himself in the stage-box, and bow his thanks to these obstreperous *claqueurs* of the Commons." The play was subsequently repeated a number of nights with undiminished success.

The "King of the Commons" is full of indications of a high order of genius for dramatic writing. The faults are those of inexperience, and an ignorance of the requisitions of the modern stage. The character of *James* is boldly sketched, and sustained with spirit throughout. The author has evidently bestowed upon it the most elaborate touches, and it is no unworthy addition to the dramatic portrait-gallery of English literature. The comic portions of the play, though not unpleasing upon the stage when well represented, betray the hand of the novice. The lovers, too, are somewhat after the old, conventional pattern of novelists and play-wrights; although *Malcolm* has one or two fine bursts of emotion in his last interview with his reprobate kinsman, *Sir Adam*.

The author deserves our admiration for the skill with which he has wrought out, from materials apparently slight, and a plot of remarkable simplicity, so pleasing and effective a drama; and this without any far-fetched incident or exaggerated passion—without any false straining after effect, or ambitious misuse of language. If he can so successfully handle a subject so unpromising, we are justified in looking for a far greater triumph, when he shall try his hand upon a story of more suggestive opportunities and more exciting interest.

"Were we to venture," says the critic in Blackwood's Magazine, from whose remarks we have already quoted, "upon any broad criticism, after a careful perusal of this play, and of *The Earl of Gowrie*, we should be inclined to say that Mr. White sins rather upon the side of reserve, than that of abandonment. We think he might well afford to give a freer rein to his genius—to scatter before us more of the flowers of poesy—to elevate the tone of his language and the breadth of his imagery, more especially in the principal scenes. It may be—and we almost

believe it—that he entertains a theory contrary to ours : that his effort throughout has been to avoid all exaggeration, and to imitate, as nearly as the vehicle of verse will allow, not only the transactions, but the dialogue of actual life. But, is this theory, after all, substantially correct ? A play, according to our ideas, is not intended to be a mere daguerreotype of what has passed or is passing around us; it is also essentially a poem, and never can be damaged by any of the arts which the greatest masters in all times have used for the composition of their poetry. Much must be said in a play, which in real life would find no utterance ; for passion, in most of its phases, does not usually speak aloud ; and therefore it is that we not only forgive, but actually require, some exaggeration on the stage, in order to bring out more clearly the thoughts which in truth would have remained unspoken.

" In the matter of ornament, much must be left to the discretion and the skill of the author. We are as adverse as any man can be, to overflowing diction—to a smothering of thoughts in verbiage—to images which distract the mind by their over-importance to the subject. But the dramatic author, if he carefully considers the past annals of his craft, can hardly fail to remark, that no play has ever yet achieved a permanent reputation, unless, in addition to general equable excellence, it contains some scenes or passages of more than common beauty or power, into the composition of which the highest species of poetry enters—where the imagination is allowed its unchecked flight, and the fancy its utmost range. Thus it was, at all events, that Shakspeare wrote ; and if our theory should be by any deemed erroneous, we are contented to take shelter under his mighty name, and appeal to his practice, artless as it may have been, as the highest authority of the world.

" But, after all, we are content to take the play as we find it. Of *The Earl of Gowrie*, Mr. White's earlier production, we have left ourselves in this article little room to speak. In some points, it is of a higher and more ambitious caste than the other —written with more apparent freedom ; and some of the characters—*Logan of Restalrig*, for example—are powerfully conceived. It is not, however, so well adapted for the stage as the

other drama. James the Sixth, according to our author's portraiture, is a far less personable individual than his grandsire; and the quaint mixture of Scots and Latin with which his speeches are decorated, would sound strangely and uncouthly in modern ears, even could a competent actor be found."

The "King of the Commons" is underlined for representation at the Park Theatre, Wednesday, the second of September, 1846; Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean appearing in the parts of *King James* and *Madeleine*—a cast, which cannot fail to insure it a degree of success in the United States, equal to that which has already attended it in London and Edinburgh.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

The present play is one of a series on the Stuart Kings of Scotland. The only one hitherto published, "The Earl of Gowrie," was sent in manuscript to Barry Cornwall, and by him forwarded, with a very flattering judgment, to Mr. Macready. Though I was entirely unacquainted with both, they at once entered very warmly into my views; and I have now the grateful task of offering to Mr. Macready my thanks for his great kindness in suggesting such improvements in this drama, as render it more adapted for the stage than my theatrical inexperience would have enabled me to make it.

I shall always feel pleased with my dramatic attempt, as it has gained me some friends of whom I may well be proud,—and shown me that if the Drama is at present sunk, it is from no unwillingness, on the part of those most interested in its success, to give every assistance to a new effort in the cause,—and still less from any niggardliness of praise and encouragement, on the part of the critics, to an author who honestly applies himself to the task.

Bonchurch, Isle of Wight,
May 11th, 1846.

TO

EDMUND PEEL, ESQ.

OF UNDERROCK, BONCHURCH;

A MARK OF FRIENDSHIP AND REGARD

FROM

THE AUTHOR.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

	Princess's.	*Park.*
King James V. of Scotland	Mr. Macready.	Mr. Charles Kean.
Sir Adam Weir, of Laichmont	" Ryder.	" Barry.
George Weir, his nephew (called Buckie)	" Cooper.	" Dyott.
Malcolm Young, related to Sir Adam	" L. Murray.	" Stark.
Laird Small, of Moss-Holm	" Compton.	" Bass.
Mungo Small, his son		" Fisher.
Lord Seton		" Sutherland.
Lord Hume		" Anderson.
Lord Maxwell		" M'Douall.
Lord Somerville		" Andrews.
Lord Kilmaurs		" Gallot.
Lord Cassilis		" Matthews.
Bishop		" Bellamy
Usher		" Povey.
Officer		" Milot.
Attendant		" Sprague.
Servant		" Hirst.

Lord Grey, Archbishop, Guards, Headsman, Robbers, Messenger, &c.

Madeleine Weir, grandchild of Sir Adam,	Mrs. Stirling.	Mrs. Charles Kean.
Widow Barton, niece to Sir Adam		" Dyott.

Time, 1542.

COSTUMES.

KING JAMES—*First Dress:* Arm-hole cloak, black velvet doublet and trunks lined with gold, black silk stockings and velvet shoes, large black hat and white feathers.—*Second Dress*—Green cloth over-shirt, sword and leather belt, and high dark riding boots, Scotch bonnet, short staff in hand.

LORDS.—The same style as the Kings's first dress, but the colors of dress different.

SIR ADAM WEIR.—A black cloth suit of the same style as those of the nobles but plainer, and trimmed with black velvet, white wig, and beard.

MALCOLM YOUNG.—*First Dress:* A gray cloth shirt, long black arm-hole cloak, something like a college gown, student's cap.—*Second Dress:* A handsome cavalier dress, after the same style as that of the lords.

LAIRD SMALL.—A plain, dark-colored doublet, and arm-hole cloak, a hood, and Scotch bonnet over it.

MUNGO.—A brocade shirt, with very short smart arm-hole cloak, gay colors, very small hat, and cock's feather.

BUCKIE.—Same style as King's second dress, shepherd's plaid wound round. The last scene, a wolf's-head cap, and large cloak.

MADELEINE.—White watered silk trimmed with blue and cherry chequers, plaid scarf and veil.

WIDOW BARTON.—Grey cloth dress, trimmed with black velvet, point lace cap.

EXITS AND ENTRANCES.

R. means *Right;* L. *Left;* R. D. *Right Door;* L. D. *Left Door;* S. E. *Second Entrance;* U. E. *Upper Entrance;* M. D. *Middle Door.*

RELATIVE POSITIONS.

R., means *Right;* L., *Left;* C., *Centre;* R. C., *Right of Centre;* L. C., *Left of Centre.*

N.B. Passages marked with Inverted Commas, *are usually omitted in the representation.*

THE KING OF THE COMMONS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Ante-Chamber at Holyrood.*—MUNGO SMALL *in attendance, and* BUCKIE *roughly dressed, are discovered.*

Buc. (R.) I pray you, let me to audience of the king.
Mun. (L.) His majesty has not appeared to-day:
I dare not call him.
Buc. Dare not call the king?
You wrong his fame. He scarce would turn away
A beggar from his gate—
Mun. And you, good friend?
Buc. Am not a beggar, save that I may see him.
Mun. I trust 'tis joyous news you bring. The whip
May pay you scurvily for woeful tidings.
Buc. How? Is the guerdon measured in such wise?
Then he runs risk to hear few sober truths.
Will it be long before the king comes forth?
Mun. Is't from the South you come? Nithsdale, they say,
Is filled with soldiers; old Caerlaverock groans
With the prodigious weight of metal guns
From Flanders.
Buc. Does it, Sir? I hope its groans
Will move your pity to procure me hearing
From gracious James.
Mun. "No, curse me if I do!
"Why, where the devil have you left your tongue?
"*Buc.* Between my teeth, Sir: 'tis the safest place.
"If you've a runaway horse, it's my advice
"To keep the stable shut.
"*Mun.* Oh! that's the advice?
"Now, then, I'll give you my advice to match:

"If you would see the king, let that same horse
"Of yours be civil; and not kick and bite,
"And look so curséd sulky." Get you gone;
King James is busy, with a dozen lords,
Some bishops, and his eminence. Be off!
Buc. Sir, I can wait.
Mun. So much the better, Sir:
You'll have a famous opportunity.—
[*Aside.*] A close-mouthed hunks! Gad, if his news were gold,
He could not be more sparing.
Buc. I'm as patient
As Job; and could change places with a milestone,
So little fond am I of moving.—Here [*Sitting* R. C.
I sit; and all the ushers in the court,
And chamberlains, and chambermaids to boot,
Sha'n't move me, till I've seen our lord the king.
Mun. I'll beat about the bush no longer.—Hem!
Plump! what's your business?
Buc. Plump!—I will not tell you.
Mun. Then you sha'n't see him.
Buc. Then I shall!
Mun. Oh, will you?—

The folding-doors fly open, C.—*Enter* JAMES, *hurriedly, followed by Lords* MAXWELL, CASSILIS, SETON, HUME, KILMAURS, GRAY, SOMERVILLE, *the* ARCHBISHOP, BISHOP, *Ushers, &c.*

James. He will not!—but he must! Not send the men?
Why, what a silken-souled, white-livered knave!
What's his excuse?
Max. He's old—he's very old.
James. Old? will he tremble in the chimney corner,
Counting his miserable years? How old?
Has he a hand left? Can he see and hear?
By heaven! he shall not cozen us with age!
If he's not with us on the Boroughmuir
With his whole house,—his vassals—every one—
He shall be seized for treason, if his age
Were counted by the century. Hark, my lords!
I know there's more than age in this excuse.
Max. Lord Bothwell is an agéd man.

James. Too old
To feel a Scotsman's blood stream at his heart!
I know, I know,—but, as I live by bread,
I'll show the sceptre's not a willow wand!
Trust me, 'twere wise in you to join my banner
With every spear you have. We've winked too long,
But we have not been blind.

Max. My gracious lord,
Banish these harsh thoughts of your noble peers,
And listen to our humble suit.

James. Oh! humble,—
Your humble suit,—now, curse on humble suits,
Urged with false tongues! I'd rather have rough words
Ay! though against ourself, from the bold heart,
Than these same humble suits. What is your suit?

Max. That you would pause, ere you advance your banner
Against the English king, your loving kinsman.

James. There spoke the recreant Scot! The English king,
God pardon me! I think, is king of Scots.
My lords—my lords! this is no time to pause;
Our loving kinsman is our deadliest foe,
Plucking our wreathéd honours, one by one,
Not in brave fight, but slily, stealthily,—
Turning our nobles into gilded slaves,
And stripping this poor crown of all it had,
Not gold and jewels—they may go, and welcome,—
But honour and the allegiance of true hearts,
That were its glory through three hundred years.
I looked not for it—I thought better things.
[*A pause—the nobles look disconcerted.*
If I had heard a man two years agone,
Say that the Scottish nobles would desert
Their king, when England dared them to come on,
I would have slain him as a slanderous liar;—
But now!—— [*Goes up abruptly*

Somer. [*To a Bishop.*] Your lordship is a man of peace;
Speak to the king.

Bishop. (L.) What can I say to him?

Somer. Tell him to spare his people.

Bishop. Ah, my lord!

I need not tell king James to spare his people;
They know he loves them.
Somer. But he'll spill their blood.
Bishop. Better to spill their blood than lose their souls
" Oh, there be times and causes, good my lords!
" When the white Christian dove must seek her nest,
" And leave the murky clouds to be cleft through
" By the strong pinioned eagle." There be times
When Piety herself must gird the sword,
And meek Religion, like an Amazon,
Dart her fierce glances over fields of war.
James. [*Advancing*, R.] Well spoken, good Lord Bishop! if the fire
That warms your heart, gave but its sacred heat
To other bosoms, there might yet be hope
For me—and Scotland!
" *Kil.* There was fire enough
" In Scottish hearts, that now are chilled."
" *James.*" Now hear me—
There shall no Douglas trample on this land,
While there's a Stuart to defend his people.
" Where is the Douglas now? In Surrey's ranks,
" Feeding on England's offals; nursing scaith
" To all our realm; hounding the tyrant on,
" The blustering braggart Henry; let them go!"
Scotland can face all Tudors on the earth,
And all the Douglases to boot!
Somer. 'Twere wise
To see your royal uncle.
James. What to hear?
His threats, and worse than threats—his patronage?
As if we stooped our sovran crown, or held it
As vassal from the greatest king alive.
No; we are poor—I know we are poor, my lords;
Our realm is but a niggard in its soil,
And the fat fields of England wave their crops
In richer dalliance with the autumn winds,
Than our bleak plains; but from our rugged dells,
Springs a far richer harvest—gallant hearts,
Stout hands, and courage that would think foul scorn
To quail before the face of mortal man.
We are our people's king. For you, my lords,

Leave me to face the enemy alone!
I care not for your silken company.
I'll to my stalwart men—I'll name my name,
And bid them follow James. They'll follow me—
Fear not—they'll follow!

Cas. [*To Somerville.*] He will do it, my lord.
Promise him fair.

Somer. My liege, I but presumed
To advise delay. I speak for other peers—
If you give order to advance to the south,
We will obey you.

James. Do you speak for all? [*Goes to Somerville.*
Lord Somerville, your hair is white with years;
Our own is grizzled now, but not with age.
We have had griefs—we've had—but let it go;
We may be harsh in tongue; but if you saw
Our heart, you would give privilege to the words,
For the dear love they spring from. Sweetest wine
Gives strongest sour. My lords, you pardon us!

Somer. My liege, we are your loving subjects ever.

James. You'll meet me on the Boroughmuir as fixed;
Armed for our war, with all your followings.
We will not keep you now. Farewell, my lords,
We have much yet before us—fare ye well!

[*Exeunt lords*, c., *except Seton, who is following.*

James. [*To Seton.*] Seton—good Seton!—stay with me.

Seton. My liege,
You honour me.

James. Well, man, and wherefore not?
Do you not know I mean to honour you?
Stand not so coldly, Seton; come more near.
Seton, I thought I that had gathered to me
Love, trust, obedience, from—but let them go!
I have you left. You'll never leave me, Seton!

Seton. Never! But why this tone?

James. Because my tongue
Takes lessons from my heart. Ah, Seton—Seton!
I was the proudest king—too proud, perhaps—
I thought I was but foremost in a band
Of men, of brothers, of true-hearted Scots;
But, pshaw!—it shall not move me.

Seton. My good liege,

I think you're too much stirred by the loose talk
Of——

James. No, no, Seton; there is more in this
Than the loose tampering of an idle tongue.
I tell you, Seton, they have made the crown
A bauble on my head. But not for that,
Fail I in purpose—not a jot. Ah, friend,
I sought for hearts—I found but lip and eyes!

Seton. You wrong me—oh! my liege—if I might dare,
I'd say my friend.

James. Say it! I like the word;
Call me your friend.

Seton. My friend! my too kind friend!

James. Well! Let me say in brief—for time is short—
Go to the Boroughmuir, and watch the looks
Of our blue Bonnets, when you give the word
For trampling on the bonny English Rose.
If they are true—ha! Seton—if our trust
Is in stout jerkins, and we pass in scorn
From blazoned shield and the tall waving plume——

Seton. I think your grace may do it.

James. Never king
Was half so great, girt round with gewgaw earls,
As circled by his people! Hurry, then,
And speed you well! I trust you. What a word
For a king's lip to utter to one man—
I trust you!

Seton. Seton has no voice for thanks. [*Exit*, C.

James. (R. C.) Will they be traitors still? and play the game
Was played at Lauder Bridge? and leave their king
Unshielded, to the scorn and laugh of England!
I will not think so meanly of them yet:
They are not forward, as their fathers were,
Who died at Flodden, as the brave should die,
With sword in hand, defiance in their hearts,
And a whole land to weep and honour them.
If they desert me—well, I can but die,
And better die than live a powerless king!

[*He sinks in thought.—Buckie comes forward*, L., *and kneels at his feet.*

What now! who are you, friend? Ha! I remember;

We've looked for you ere this. Up, up, man—up!
What want you with us?
Buc. Your majesty—but there be ears too near—
[*Pointing to Mungo.*
James. [*To Mungo.*] Retire!
Mun. [*Aside.*] The hunks! I wonder who he is.
[*Exit,* R.
James. Speak out, man! 'Twas a perilous dip in the Avon,
That your stout arm and ready help made safe.
Buc. Oh, sir, we're used to simple things like that!
James. What! plucking drowning kings out of a river?
Well, it is lucky you had practice, friend,
We might have fared the worse else.
Buc. I was happy
In being by to risk my limbs and life,
Where Scotland has so long fixed all her love.
James. Zounds! you speak well—a stout, bold, honest fellow,—
What want you with us?
Buc. To make known to your grace
A something that concerns the kingdom's weal.
James. In truth? some scant of justice to yourself?
Some trickster wronged you on a market-day?
Out with it! we will right you, if we can.
Buc. No, gracious king; I speak not of myself.
"*James.* Your father, then? gave him false weight of grain.
"For Heaven's sake, man, make your complaint at once."
"*Buc.*" 'Tis treason against you.
James. What say you?—treason?
"Who are you, friend?
"*Buc.* I saved your royal life
"At hazard of my own. Oh, happier far,
"If I may save your fame!
"*James.* Sir, pardon me,
"If I mistook you! Now I listen—speak!
Buc. My liege, you've heard of rich Sir Adam Weir,
Of Laichmont?
James. I've heard of him—go on;
A rich old usurer.
Buc. Ay, Sir; but his stores

Are heaped for other uses than to lend
To needy lords, or riotous young heirs.
James. What is't you mean? You speak in parables.
Buc. He pays a stipend—month by month he pays it—
By order sent from England, "signed by Bowes,"
To knights and nobles that take daily stand
Around your throne.
James. What nobles and what knights?
But, no—I will not know their names. A stipend—
A monthly bribe! To bend their necks so low!
I would not hear their names. If it were Hume!
Or Seton! No, no, no—it cannot be!
Ha! a base bribe; a mean, false, cringing crew!
Tell me no name! I'd make them rue the hour
They sold our Scottish honour for their bribes—
But—is it true?—[*Seizes him by the collar.*] "Dog! if you tell me false,
"I'll brain you on the wall!" Who told you this?
Where lives this Weir? How got you this advice?
Buc. He lives at Laichmont, near to Calder, Sire.
James. I'll see him. From his heart I'll tear the truth.
Thanks, friend. 'Twas kindly meant: but, by my soul,
I wish this thing had not been told to me,
That I had thought them fickle, wilful, cold,
Cowards—ay, cowards—anything but this.
Thanks: I will see you soon. Take this, and this.
[*Gives his ring and purse.*
Say naught of what you've told me. I will ride
To Lalchmont House this hour,—this very hour.
Oh, if 'tis true: if they're the very slaves
To live on foreign bribes—there shall be blood
Shall make the High Street run as if with wine!
Good day, my friend—be silent—and farewell. [*Exit*, c
Buc. He rides alone—he must not ride alone;
He's worth the whole of the nobles in a bunch.
I'll be his guard, if no one else will.
Mun. [*Re-entering*, R.] Well?
What said the King?
Buc. That if an impudent fellow
Asked any questions, I must tell him—
Mun.—What?
I knew you'd tell me.

Buc. That he was an ass,
And should keep all his breath to cool his porridge. [*Exit.*
Mun. Breath!—porridge!—in your teeth, you saucy knave! [*Exit, c.*

Scene II.—*A Wood in Laichmont.*

Enter Madeleine *and* Malcolm, r.

Made. This way it flew. Come, Malcolm; see how high
It soars, as if 'twere weary of the world,
And wished to have a home far up in heaven!
Malcolm. Ah, 'twere a happy bird to win such place,
And never sink to rugged earth again!
Made. Oh, for a hawk, full summed and high of soar,
To follow it into the filmy clouds
And bring it to our feet. But, well-a-day!
We have no hawking now. Five years since, Malcolm,
Ere you went to St. Andrew's, how we loved
To watch the quarry as it rose and rose,
And our strong falcon after it! But now
We are so dull and listless.—You've forgotten
The manege of the lure. I do not think
You could unstrike the jesses for your life.
Mal. I wish I could as easily unstrike
The strings that keep my memories in hood,
And let them down the wind.
Made. And think no more
Of the gay time we had when we were young?
When we were all alone with cousin Barton?
When Grandsire was away in foreign climes,
Far o'er the sea, and we rode forth and hawked,
And laughed all day. Would you forget them, Malcolm?
Mal. I wish I could, my gentle Madeleine,—
"For these bright clouds come up like sinful visions,
"Conjured by magic to distract the souls
"Of solitary men, in lightless caves,
"Retired to commune with their own sad hearts.
Made. But, Malcolm, then your heart was never sad;
You were the boldest horseman, sped your arrow
Straighter than all, rode deftliest at the ring,
And sang the gayest. Wherefore are you changed?

Mal. You know the reason, thoughtless Madeleine!
Made. I don't: I see you're changed. I know not why.
Mal. Know you not I have felt the chilling hand
Of the Archbishop?
Made. And that saddens you?
Dear Malcolm, do not mind my heedless talk,
I would not make you sad for all the world.
[*She holds out her hand.*
Mal. Would you not? But—I may not take your hand.
Made. Why not, dear Malcolm? Take my hand, I pray you.
Mal. No.
Made. Malcolm, you are not offended with me?
I did not mean to vex you. Oh, forgive me!
I cannot bear to see you look so sad.
Will you not take my hand?
Mal. What! take your hand?
I would—oh, Heavens—no! I'll not take your hand.
Made. And we grew up together!—and at last
You're angry with me—tell me, tell me why?
Oh! I'll do anything to please you, Malcolm;
Just take my hand, and say that you forgive me!
Mal. Madeleine, if I were to touch your hand-
If—but—I tell you—no, no, never more!
[*He covers his face with his hands.*

Enter James, L., *disguised in a common travelling dress, resisting robbers.*

Rob. Down with him!
James. Easier said than done, my friend!
What, ho!
Made. Help! help!
Mal. [*Rushing forward with his staff.*] What! five on one? Down, dogs!
And you—and you—— [*The robbers are beaten off.*
James. All gone—all gone! i'faith,
'Tis pleasant after-dinner exercise;
And you, brave sir—I thank you from my heart;
'Twas nobly done—by'r lady—and a youth!
Let the knaves go; they did not fight amiss.
Mal. You are not hurt, sir?
James. But a bump or so

On the tough head; 'tis used to such small coin.
One fellow came behind me with a staff,
Before I saw him. Let me thank you again,
For timely aid. I would I knew your name,
That I might name it in my prayers to-night.
Mal. My name is Malcolm Young, commendator
Of the St. Andrew's Church, a distant kinsman
To the owner of this ground, Sir Adam Weir.
This is Sir Adam Weir's, of Laichmont Grange.
James. Sir Adam Weir?—a worthy gentleman.
I feel my wound is heavier than I thought:
Might I make trespass for an hour or two
On his kind nature?
Mal. This, sir, is his grandchild,
She'll bid you welcome to her kinsman's house.
James. Madam. I am a stranger in these parts,
Or surely I should, long ere this, have heard
The praises of a face so fair as yours.
Mude. [*In alarm.*] Oh, sir, waste not the time in compliment—
Pray you, come to the house. My cousin, sir,
Is skilled in liniments. Support him, Malcolm.
Mal. Lean on my arm.
James. I've felt its worth before;
I hope to pay you for't some other time.
[*Exeunt*, L., *Malcolm supporting King James.*

Scene III.—*A Parlour in Laichmont House.*

Sir Adam Weir *and* Widow Barton *discovered.—Sir Adam at a table*, L. C., *is busy arranging a packet.—Widow Barton seated*, R. C., *has a small pestle and mortar on her knee.*

Sir A. "A messenger—a faithful messenger.
"Malcolm—he is my kinsman, and a priest;
"This Mungo—he's a courtier and a fool;
"If Dacre knew the risk he lays on me
"In traffic with these Lords, he scarce would grudge
"Name, rank, all that I claim, to pay the peril."
If I can get these missives to the lords,
And stay this war—by the persuasive tones
Of English crowns! The risk!—the risk!—this day

A messenger must be found,—or down goes all
The fabric I have raised,—James will draw sword—
And I—but tis too horrible to think on't. [*Comes forward.*
Widow. I warrant, now, my uncle has some plan—
Some herb, now, with a crabbed Latin name—
To mix with this discoction.—He's so glum!
I think I'll ask him.—Uncle! Good Sir Adam! [*Rises.*
Sir A. Ha!—oh! 'tis only you—I'm busy, niece.
Where is your cousin?—where's my Madeleine?
Widow. I thought 'twould be about his Madeleine!
She's gone out for an hour with Malcolm Young.
Sir A. Good! I would have her hold his company
As oft as may be. He is stored with learning,
And may enrich her mind—a studious youth.
Tell her, when she returns, I wish to see her.
Widow. It's always so. These wondrous clever people
Are all alike. And as for Madeleine,
They'll spoil her: I'm quite sure they'll spoil the girl
With their fine learning. I never saw any good
Come of such things. "I never knew a word
"Of any tongue but good, plain, honest Scots,
"Nor read a book, nor wrote a single line,
"And I've done very well. I wish the girl
"May do as well, with all her French and Spanish."
Sir Adam, know you what it is o'clock?
The laird will soon be here.
Sir A. I shall be ready
To give him welcome.
Widow. Is the laird a scholar?
Sir A. I do not think he is. He never aimed
At scholarship.
Widow. Indeed?—so much the better—
Nor I.
Sir A. What, did you never?
Widow. Never aimed
At scholarship; but I'll get ready now
To see the laird. [*Exit,* R.
Sir A. And yet she was the wife—
This silly, talking, thoughtless, empty thing—
Of a brave man—a gentleman—as wise
And deep in counsel, as was e'er a man
Of Scottish blood; "ay, and he loved her too,

" And knew not, all the time they lived together,
" What a poor doll she was. 'Tis very strange;
" For she had never sense to see his worth,
" And yet she loved him too, after a sort;
" And she was proud of him—yet knew not why—"
Well; they were happy.—Why should Madeleine
Be wretched, if her husband is a fool?
I would not have her wretched—not quite wretched.
But she must wed the heir of rich Laird Small.
" Oh! she will love him,—perhaps,—as Barton did
" My silly niece, her cousin. Well, I hope so."

Enter Laird Small, R.

Laird. Give ye good day, Sir Adam.
Sir A. Welcome, Sir,
Welcome to Laichmont Grange.
Laird. A dirty day,
Gadso—a dirty day—and a false mare.
Sir A. I hope no ill has happ'd.
Laird. A dirty day,
I tell you. As I came by Whitstone mill,
I lost the path: and—I must sell the mare,
She's a false gipsy—and walked into the ditch,
And never minded how I tugged and pulled—
She knelt down on her knees, to drink the faster,
And o'er her head—a false deceitful jade—
And into the ditch—I'll sell her for ten pounds.
Sir A. Done. I will buy her of you; fret no more.
Laird. English—the pounds were English!
Sir A. Be it so.
You're not much hurt?
Laird. No, no—not hurt; but spoilt,
My doublet splashed, and all my new white feather
Clean lost. My bonnet's like a bantam cock
Without the tail.
Sir A. I'm glad to see you here,
And have been thinking over what we said,
When last we spoke upon a certain matter
Touching us both.
Laird. Gadso! and so have I.
Sir A. You see this pictured plan, friend Small; 'tis drawn

By a cunning artist. 'Tis our two estates,
The boundaries, the measurements; each field,
Each tree, each ditch.
Laird. It is not possible!
Gadso? I had a friend who—let it pass—
I have forgotten—but he held the pencil,
And drew and drew—'twas marvellous how he drew.
And this is yours and mine? Gadso! gadso!—
I see.
"*Sir A.* You see where, to the right, it bends—
"*Laird.* Ay, 'tis the Langstone Knowe—I know it well.
"I have a flock there—thirty-five white sheep—
"A goodly flock.
"*Sir A.* And here the river runs!
"*Laird.* It is the Bourtree burn—the bonny burn!
"Gadso! he's a rare hand, the planner on't."
Sir A. If the estates were joined, and one sole man
Could ride round both, and call them all his own,
"Here following up the river to the north,
"The hill along the east, and to the south
"And west the king's high-road"—what say you, friend?
Laird. Gadso! 'twere a most pleasant ride. Gadso!
'Twould be a square. I would it could be done.
Sir A. It may be done.
Laird. I cannot sell the lands—
Moss-Holm is fast entailed——
Sir A. Upon your son.
Laird. Hoo! Gadso! he's a youth! I say, a youth.
I'll say no more: there was a friend of mine
Looked on him once, and said, "Friend Small," he said,
"Your son is such a youth!" And so he is—
He's such a youth.
Sir A. I've never had the pleasure
To see him yet.
Laird. Oh! he is well worth seeing;
"A goodly youth—not tall, not very tall—
"But stout—exceeding stout—and waits at court—"
A courtly gentleman; the King admires him,
And loves him much—a very proper man,
My son, young Mungo Small.
Sir A. I doubt it not;

And if you're fixed on what we settled last,
I will not say you no. My girl is young
And gentle, as I think—my only heir,
Since heaven has left me to a childless age,
After such struggles—both my boys ta'en from me.
Laird. I never lost a son—gadso! I never
Lost anything I cared for. Hem!—I am wrong—
I am a widower, dear Sir Adam Weir;
I lost my wife—it was a grievous loss—
Which minds me of a merry speech was made
On the occasion by a friend of mine.
He said—what was it, now?—I don't remember—
But it was shrewd,—it made us laugh so much!
A pleasant wag!
Sir A. When can I see your son?
Laird. Oh, any time. His month of waiting ends
This very day. He'll come from Holyrood
And hurry here.

Enter Madeleine, R.

But here's a pretty maid!
This is your grandchild, as I think.
Sir A. It is.
What ails you, Madeleine? You're pale, you're sad.
Made. Oh, sir! a thing has happ'd—a man near killed.
Laird. Gadso!
Sir A. What man? what man? How mean you, girl?
Made. Malcolm and I were walking near the skirt
Of Langstone planting, when there suddenly
Rushed to us a man, resisting the assault
Of five fierce robbers——
Laird. Gad ha' mercy! Robbers!
Made. Malcolm rushed forward, and the villains fled.
But the poor man—a wayfarer he seems—
Was wounded, and he begged to rest awhile.
Sir A. He's welcome. This is past all suffering;
That robber grows more daring, day by day.
You've heard, Laird Small, of Buckie of Drumshorlan,
The reiver——
Laird. A deil's Buckie! I can't sleep
In my own bed anights for thinking of him.
He minds me——

Sir A. Nay, don't tremble, Madeleine;
The danger's past. I'll see the stranger's wounds
Attended to.—Go call my niece, my dear;
Let him be taken to the tapestry chamber,
In the north tower. [*Exit Madeleine*, L.
Laird Small, will you go with me?

Laird. What, I? and see him die?—perhaps he'll die!
I had a friend—a soldier—ah, I know!—
He was a gallant man, and fought at—somewhere,
No matter what 'twas called; a cannon shot
Took off his head—and so, poor gentleman,
He died. Pray Gad, this man do not the same!
But if his head's on—yes, yes, I'll go see him

Sir A. Come, then!

Laird. Oh, after you, Sir Adam!

Sir A. Come! [*Exeunt*, R.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Tapestry Room at Laichmont.*

JAMES *discovered, seated*, L. C.—MADELEINE *at his side.*

Made. How feel you, sir?

James. Confused;—as if in doubt
Whether I live on this hard, workday soil,
Or have already passed the bounds of time,
And have an angel sent to solace me.

Made. My cousin will be here with drugs, ere long,
Shall soothe your pain.

James. There are two deep physicians
To whom I trust my cure,—wise Doctor Time,
And his meek colleague, Patience. If, meanwhile,
My gentle nurse, you'll let me wind your scarf
Round my shock hairs, 'twill bring such virtue with it,
"From touch of your most sweet and piteous bosom,"
That it will soothe the wound more speedily
Than all the marvels in her skilful hands.

[*Winds the scarf around his head.*

Laird Small *looks cautiously in,—then enters,* R.

Laird. Is the man dead?—I hope he is not dead—
I cannot bear to look on a dead man.
Is he clean gone?

James. [*To Madeleine.*] What scaramouch is this?

Made. 'Tis the Laird Small; the owner of Moss-Holm.

James. [*Aside.*] Oh, father of my wonderful new usher—
A likely sire of such a learnèd son!

Enter Sir Adam Weir, R.

Sir A. [*To the Laird.*] I fear your speech may hurt the wounded man—
[*To James.*] You find the noise too much, sir?

James. Yes, the voice
Of the old Merry-Andrew is too sharp.

Sir A. Sir! you mistake—he is a gentleman.

James. Oh, cry you mercy! I thought he was a clown,
Sent forward by some wandering mountebank.

Sir A. Hush! speak more low. You're not much hurt, I hope?

James. Not quite enough to mind me of a priest—
A little too much to mind me of a play.

Sir A. Oh! rest and time will set you up again.
[*To the Laird.*
Retire you now, Laird Small,—I'll hold some speech
Apart with him, and join you by-and-by.

Laird. Gadso! it is not safe; if he should die,
'Twould frighten you for life.—Pray you, good sir,
Don't die till we've had notice. I once knew
A man—but—well, I hope you'll join us soon.
Don't die, good stranger—come, my pretty one!
[*Exeunt Laird and Madeleine,* R.

Sir A. Are you of Scotland, friend?

James. [*Rises and comes forward,* L. C.] No need ask that,
"If you but hear the music of my voice,
"And see the graceful rounding of my cheek."
Oh, yes; I'm Scotch enough!

Sir A. I saw at a glance
You were no Frenchman!

James. No, i'faith—not I;
My foot's a little too heavy;—no, sir, nothing
But a plain Scot—and honest, as times go.

Sir A. You look so, sir!
James. Looks are deceitful, sir;
I rede you trust them not!
Sir A. [*Aside.*] A brave-tongued knave!—
And were you travelling all alone, my friend,
When this befel?
James. Yes, all alone; intent
For Stirling, on some business of my own.
" *Sir A.* Of weight, perhaps?
" *James.* Ay, business of such weight
" That I could trust no hand with 't but my own.
" *Sir A.* A friend, perhaps, might aid you——
" *James.* Well—a friend!
" There is no saying what a friend might do.
" But I make little doubt the quest I'm on
" Will prosper as it is!
" *Sir A.* I have some power—
" Some influence in the realm, and may give help
" If you require it.
" *James.* Sir, you're passing kind,
" And it may chance that I require your help
" In what I aim at."
Sir A. [*Aside.*] If I could gain him now
To bear my message!—And your home, you say,
Is Stirling?
James. Sometimes.
Sir A. Or was't Edinburgh?
James. Sometimes there, too.
Sir A. A wanderer, I perceive:
Have you crossed sea?
James. [*Aside.*] This fellow questions hard
Oh, yes; I've been a rover, wet and dry,
And can trim sail, and hand, and reef, and steer,
With e'er a skipper in Leith.
Sir A. A trader, Sir?
James. In most things—from sweet looks to a true friend,
To a sword point held to an enemy's throat.
Sir A. I like sweet looks best—Did you travel far
In other lands? For wines, perhaps, to the South?
James. Ay, Sir: I've seen the walls of Bordeaux town
Rise 'mid rich vineyards on the shores of France,

And the whole land lie like a perfumed bride
On her green couch, with birds for choristers,
And a blue sky, unknown to this cold clime,
Hung over like a gorgeous canopy.
Sir A. You speak like a brave stringer of rich words—
A poet, as I may say.
James. I've tried it, Sir;
But poetry's a poor trade, and only fit
For white hands and weak heads.
Sir A. You're libellous
On our good king: he rhymes, you know.
James. Oh, does he?
I hope, Sir, he rhymes well.
Sir A. I'm not a critic,
But I have heard some men of good repute
For wit and judgment—
James. Well, what said they?—quick!
Sir A. Men that knew what the tricks of rhyming were———
James. Well, well—they praised the verses?
Sir A. They? not they!
James. Why, what the devil—but—go on, go on!
Sir A. You're pleased to see a brother rhymester mock'd—
Another proof you're of the poet's tribe.
James. [*Aside.*] Why, what a twaddling, sensible old fool!
This is no traitor. [*Aloud.*] Ah, Sir, Poesy
Holds no communion with such thoughts as these.
In her enchanted garden, 'mid the flowers,
Grows no base thing; but in the balmy air,
Walking, as angels walked in Paradise,
Hope, and her sister, white-robed Charity,
Move onward, circled by the arms of Love! [*Crosses to* R.
The poet—but, grace Marie! what an ass
To talk of Paradise and jangling stuff!
Forgive it, sir.
Sir A. There's nothing to forgive.
It's pretty, very pretty—not quite plain
To dull old ears like mine, but pretty, pretty!
[*Aside.*] The very man I prayed for—all is safe.—
I think your talents have been wasted, sir,

"In voyaging to France, and back again;"
You should to court.
James. To court?—[*Aside.*] We're coming on.—
Sir, I've no patron.
Sir A. Yes, my friend, you have.
I have some power at Holyrood myself.
James. Indeed?
Sir A. Why, yes: between ourselves, my friend,
There are a dozen—ay, a score of the lords,
Fast friends of mine.
James. A score!
Sir A. Ay; all of them.
"Why, there's not one who would not hold him bound
"To do my bidding. You shall see their zeal
"To serve you, when they know you come from me.
"*James.* Not one—not one left out! Now, by my life,
"I warn you say not so.
"*Sir A.* Why not, my friend?
"*James.* For, by the heaven!—nay, nay, excuse me, sir,
"You raise my hopes too high.
"*Sir A.* No whit, no whit:"
Name any name you please—I'll answer for it;
His lordship, though he holds his head as high
As a crowned king's, if I but say the word,
Will fawn on you like a spaniel.
James. Now, beware,
I tell you these are dangerous boasts——
Sir A. But try it.
I have a packet, even now prepared,
For certain of their lordships.
James. Which of them?
For, as my soul shall answer—there again!
I'm all in such a twitter of wild hopes;
All!—did you say all?—oh, say not all!
Sir A. Why not?
James. Nothing—pray pardon me again. Not all—
They can't be all at your proud beck—not all!
Sir A. Oh, yes, they are, though,—all to do you service,
If you will take that packet to the court.
James. I? take the packet?—Sir, I asked it not.
Sir A. You were too bashful. I will bring it to you
Ere you go hence.

James. I think I've heard the name
Of the lord—but his name escapes me now—
Seton—Lord Seton, is he in the list?
Is there a missive to Lord Seton?

Sir A. Seton—
Oho! You've heard of Seton—though he's so near
The throne, Sir, let me tell you, ere long time
There may be one to *him*;—a little bird
Has whistled in my ear.—Be not afraid,
You shall hear more.

James. [*Aside.*] And so shall you!—But, James—
Have you no packet for our lord the king?

Sir A. No.—He's a brother bard, and may be jealous—
Let him not see you in the court.

James. I'll do't.
Give me the packet.

Sir A. In an hour or two.
Meanwhile, refresh you; will you forth for air?
My kinsman, Malcolm, will attend on you—
You'll find him on the lawn.

James. I long to thank him
For his good service. [*Aside.*] Oh, suspicious doubts
Be hushed—be hushed!—the truth will out ere long.

[*Exeunt* L., *James following.*

SCENE II.—*The Lawn at Laichmont.*

Enter MALCOLM YOUNG, *with a book,* R.

Mal. It tells me to forget the world;—forget!
Why tell me not to cease to live and think?
To struggle with my heart! Do I not struggle?
Have I not striven, and toiled, and wept, and prayed;
And all in vain!—oh, to be doomed to live
For self, apart from life's soft charities—
No hope—no object! [*Reads.*]

Enter behind, JAMES *and* MADELEINE, R.

" *Made.* I have a mind to try
" To make him gay. Shall I put both my hands
" Before his eyes, and cry, Who blinds—who blinds?
" *James.* He cannot miss the voice!
" *Made.* Oh, he's so dull,

"You shall not get a smile into his face,
"Nor smoothe his brow by all that you can do.
"*James.* Nay, I need hardly try, if you have failed.
"But I can scarce believe there breathes the man,
"The stock, the stone, that would not feel the power
"Of words like yours. Why, the dull night as well
"Might try to keep its gloom on, when the day
"Laughs from the east. He must be cold as ice,
"Harder than steel, that melts not at such looks:
"Try him again."
Made. "Oh, no! I scarce can venture:"
He looks with such sad melancholy eyes,
I almost grow as sorrowful as himself. [*Sighs.*]
James. Do you?—I'll see what efforts I can make
To chase his sadness.
Made. Do, and I'll be by
To aid you. Oh! I wish you had known him, Sir,
Before he thought of turning priest.
James. A priest!—
He's a good soldier spoilt. I'll speak to him.
Made. And I'll wait here.
James. Good morrow, master Young;
You look as if the thumps you gave the sculls'
Of Buckie's band, lay heavy on your conscience.
Mal. No, Sir. I'm glad to see you in such case.
James. I'm sorry to see *you*, Sir, in such case:
You have no dint upon your head, I trust?
Mal. No.
James. Then your trusty staff played sentinel
To a good tune, and heartily I thank you.
Mal. No thanks.
James. Yes, many thanks; thanks warm and true.
I must pledge faith with you.
Mal. Oh, pardon, Sir,
'Twas nothing.
James. And you won't shake hands with me?
Mal. Oh, willingly!
James. Well, now we're plighted friends,
I cannot bear to see you moping thus.
Mal. Oh, Sir, it—I am very——
James. Tush, man, tush!—

You're wretched—very wretched; what's the matter?
Is not your kinsman kind?
Mal. Yes; he is kind.
James. Have you no powerful friend to plead your cause,
And raise you in the Church?
Mal. I would not rise;
"I tell you, sir, I have no wish to rise;
"Enough that I am in the church without
"Being raised; I would not have a powerful friend
"To plead my cause."
James. Oh!
Mal. If Sir Adam Weir
Had deigned to ask my thoughts,—but no—no—no—
He used the power, wrung from my poverty—
My orphan youth,—but I am wrong—most wrong—
I pray you ask no more, Sir, of my doings;
If I have served you, let your gratitude—
Though such I claim not,—let it show itself
In silence. I would have my grief remain
In my own breast.
James. Ah! but that were unkind
To friends like me; for, trust me, though so short
The date of our acquaintance, it has grown
At once to friendship.
Mal. But I know you not—
I never saw you till an hour ago.
James. Oh!—so suspicious? Look on me, my friend—
"See you a lurking devil in my eyes?"
I tell you I would serve you if I could,
"And sympathy is all that I can offer.
"Reject it not. I'm but a simple yeoman;
"But I would know your grief, if happily
"I might relieve it. If it come to the worst,
"I can but share it." Come, come! hide no more
The sorrow that consumes you. Bring the snake
Forth from the hole where it but gathers venom!—
Out on the sunny grass with the vile thing!
We'll stamp it into powder with our heels.
Mal. Why—I—I have no sorrow to reveal.
James. You have. But if you trust not to my words,
And scorn my friendship——

Mal. Oh, forgive me, Sir;
My heart was full. I do not scorn your friendship,
"God knows the name of friendship is too sweet
"To be thrown by. Oh, Sir, your pardon!" Here
Is my true hand. I thank you from my heart.
James. Now, then, 'tis as I thought. You'll not repent
Your trusting me.
Mal. There's something in your eye
Moves confidence. I love the very sound
Of your bold voice. You have no gloomy thoughts—
All's sunshine round, above, before you.
James. Ah!
You know not—but—enough! Poor Malcolm Young!
Tell me what weighs so heavy on your heart.
Made. [*behind.*] Now I shall hear what makes poor Malcolm sad.
Mal. Sir, 'tis but three weeks since that I came home—
Home! no, I dare not call it home,—came here;—
After long tarrying at St. Andrew's schools,
By order of my kinsman, "at the last
"A month since,—'tis one little month ago."
James. Go on, go on!
Made. [*aside.*] Now comes the hidden grief.
Mal. He forced me, by deceitful messages,
To vow me to the priesthood, when my soul
Longed more for neighing steeds than psalteries.
Oh, what a happy fortune had been mine
To draw the sword 'neath gallant James's eye,
And rouge it to the hilt in English blood!
James. Heaven bless you, boy!—your hand again—your hand!—
Would you have served the king?
Mal. Ay! died for him!
James. And he'd have cherished you, believe me, boy,
"And held you in his heart, and trusted you—
"And you'd ha' been true brothers;—for a love
"Like yours is what poor James has need of most."
Is this your grief?
Mal. Alas, my grief lies deeper!
"I might have bent me to my cruel fate,
"With pray'rs that our brave king find Scots as true,
"And worthier of his praise, than Malcolm Young."

When I came back, I had not been a day
'Mid well-known scenes, in the remembered rooms,
Till to my heart, my soul, the dreadful truth
Was opened like a gulf; and I—fool! fool!
To be so dull, so blind—I knew too late
That I was wretched—miserable—doomed,
Like Tantalus, to more than hellish pains—
To feel—yet not to dare to speak, or think;
To love—and be a priest!

Made. [*aside.*] To love! to love!—
How strange this is!

James. How found you this, poor friend?

Mal. By throbbings at the heart, when I but heard
Her whispered name; thoughts buried long ago
'Neath childish memories—we were children both—
Rose up like arméd phantoms from their grave,
Waving me from them with their mailéd hands!
"I saw her, with the light of womanhood
"Spread o'er the childish charms I loved so well—
"I heard her voice, sweet with the trustful tones
"She spoke with long ago, yet richer grown
"With the full burden of her ripened thoughts."

Made. [*aside.*] My head goes round—my heart will burst!

Mal. I saw
A world lie open—and an envious spell
Fencing it from me; day by day, I felt
Grief and the blackness of unsunn'd despair
Closing all round me.

James. And the maiden's name?

Mal. Was Madeleine Weir.

[*Madeleine recoils, and leans for support on the side scene,* L.

James. [*goes to Madeleine.*] You're faint; you're deadly pale!

Made. 'Tis nothing,—'twas a pain—a sudden pang
Shot through my head—but, I am better now.

Mal. She was not listening!

Made. No; I heard nothing—nothing;
'Twill soon be gone. I pray you, leave me now—
I'm strong—I'm strong! [*She tries to walk, but sinks.*]
Help, Malcolm!—I am dying!

James. [*catching her ere she falls.*] Run, run for aid! and
come not back again;
Perhaps she heard you. I will guard her here.
Mal. Help, help! for Madeleine—"help, Widow
Barton!" [*Exit Malcolm*, R.
James. Wake, Madeleine—he's gone.
Made. Who? Malcolm gone?
James. Look not so wildly!
Made. What was't I said!
Did he hear aught, "or see me—how I fell?"
James. No, no; he heard you not—come, cheer you, lady,
What can I say to cheer her? Droop not so,
There shall come happier days.
Made. Oh! never, never!
James. Ay, but there shall, tho'! "Gather up your heart,
"And brace you for a struggle with your grief.
"What! hopelessness sit on a brow like this;
"And sorrow blight the roses on these lips?"
I tell you, do not sigh, poor Madeleine;
I tell you---nay, I lay command on you,
Start not that I command---I tell you, hope!
By heaven! I'd trample on all laws in the world
That bring such sorrow.
Made. Oh, Sir, by your voice
I guess how kind you are!
James. Ay, kind and true—
And you shall never know me aught than kind.
So, cheer you, Madeleine!
"*Made.* Oh, Sir, I'm weak!
"A moment with myself would strengthen me,—
"I think I'm better now.
"*James.*" Come, lean on me!
Made. No, no; I'd be alone!
James. Then droop not, girl;
'Tis a black night that lets no starlight through;
And so I leave you. [*Aside.*] Ah, I see it all!
A hapless pair that knew not their own hearts,
And pay the forfeit of their ignorance
In tears. [*Exit*, L.
Made. For me!—for me!—and I the while,
So giddy—cruel—ne'er to see his love
Was other than in days of our glad youth!

And blinder, colder, ne'er to feel that here,
In my deep, inmost heart, there was enshrined
His image!—oh, and it is sinful now!
He dare not love! I dare not love him more!
"And all the happiness I felt to see him,
"To speak to him, to wander by his side,
"I thought was but our friendship, as of old,
"Long years since. And 'tis all for me he mourns!—
"Hopeless!—oh, wherefore have I heard his secret,
"And wherefore have I found my own?"

Enter SIR ADAM WEIR, R.

Sir A. My child,
I told you that my worthy friend, Laird Small,
Had honoured me by making choice of you
To wed his son. I've given him my consent;
And in a little time, the gallant youth
Will pay his court; no blushes—no denials—
You marry him. I've said it. That's enough!
"You'll be prepared to smile upon his suit."

Made. I, sir! I——

Sir A. Let me see no foolish qualms;
"He is a gay and courtly gentleman,
"And rich as any noble in the land."

Made. Sir!——

Sir A. Not a word; make ready to receive him,
He will be here anon.

Made. I'm weak—I'm ill—
I cannot see him.

Sir A. Cannot see my friend?
The man I've chosen? let me hear no more
Of idle feints. If you're unkind to him,
Or pout, or knit your brows, or play the fool,
You shall repent it!—Get you to your room,
And do as I tell you. [*Exit Madeleine*, L.
I have never loved
A thing on earth as I have loved that girl,
"Since my two sons and her poor mother died."
But I will not be mocked,

Enter LAIRD *and* MUNGO, R.

Laird. Gadso! Sir Adam,

We are in luck; here is my son arrived.
This is Sir Adam, son;—this is my son, sir.
Mun. Give ye my finger. Any news afloat?
The French ain't landed, are they? What a doublet
You've got, Sir Adam! This is Genoa pile.
Sir A. I'm glad to bid you welcome to my house.
Mun. 'Tis pretty well; but not quite Holyrood.
That window's not in keeping with the door;
The pediment—the peristyle—the plinth—
The whole façade's a little incongruous, eh?
Laird. Gadso! he speaks like a huge book of plans!
I knew a man——
Mun. Hush, father! never mind
What man you knew. Is the report correct
The English have a force upon the border?
Sir A. I know not.
Laird. Oh, but *he* knows everything.
Pray Gad you knew one half as much as he!
Where he can hold his knowledge is a puzzle;
His head should be as big as Binny Craig.
Mun. 'Twould make my hat cost something. How d'ye like
My bonnet? 'tis the newest cut from Paris.
Sir A. 'Tis a good bonnet.
Mun. Do you like the feather?
I chose the feather: 'tis a knowing feather;
A sort of bold, audacious, fighting feather;
'Tis a cock's feather; do you like the feather?
Laird. Gadso! he has more taste than twenty hatters.
I like to hear him talk about his clothes,
It smacks so of the court.
Mun. Heard you the news?
Sir A. No! I've not heard.
Laird. Gadso! he's such a youth!
A politic youth. He'll be a—what d'ye call it,
That sits at council, and does naught all day?—
A minister of state!—he will, I'm sure.
Mun. There must be something very curious
In Germany at present. It portends
No good. The ambassador has dressed his suite
In green. Can there be any reason for it?
In green! A suite in green! I think 'tis odd!

Laird. Gadso! perhaps it is. Perhaps 'tis odd!
I had a green coat once; 'tis long ago——
Mun. [*Stops his mouth.*] Excuse my father, Sir; he was ne'er at court,
And can know nothing about politics.
Sir A. 'Tis a deep study.
Mun. You may say so, truly;
Jemmy comes often; ay, sometimes at night,
To ask my counsel——
Sir A. Jemmy! who is he?
Mun. Jemmy! why, Jemmy Stuart! We're such friends,
We never stand on one another's titles;
Jemmy and Mungo! nothing more or less;
He never called me mister in his life.
Sir A. Hem!—Will you walk into my house, Laird Small?
And you, Sir? There is wine set in the parlor;
You must refresh you.
Widow. [*Behind the scenes.*] Where is she? Where's the girl?
Where's Madeleine?

Enter WIDOW BARTON, R., *in a hurry, with a glass on a salver, in search of Madeleine.*

Widow. I've got it ready now;
Take but the glass; don't wait a single minute!
Off with it!
[*Laird Small takes the glass, and drinks.*]
Laird. Gadso! I'm a murdered man!
Why, what the devil!———
Widow. Why, you've drunk it, Sir!
I wished you to run with it to my cousin,
Poor Madeleine! She is fainting!
Laird. I'm a corpse!
I feel I'm dead. Gadso! my liver boils!
My reins!—my kidneys!—What the devil was it?
Widow. 'Twas a confusion of hot volatiles
And liquid hartshorn. 'Twas for smelling, Sir.
Laird. Gadso!—oh, Lard! I feel I'm in my grave!
I would have rather suck'd a burning coal
Like sugar candy. 'Twas a melted colic!

I've swallowed it! Gadso! there was a man
Ate fire! and—ugh!—ugh!—I have done the same!—
Mun. Why, father; what a fuss you make about it!
Sir A. The wine is in the hall.
Mun. [*To Wid. Barton.*] Let me conduct you, madam?
Laird. He's a youth! [*Exeunt*, L.

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The front of Laichmont House.*

Enter JAMES, R. *and* BUCKIE, L., *meeting.*

James. What make you here, friend?
Buc. Does your Majesty—
James. Hush! We're no majesty away from court.
Buc. Pardon me. Is Sir Adam as I said?
James. I'll tell you what I think of him ere long,—
Not now—not now. But wherefore came you here?
Buc. To plead for pardon that I came too late
To guard you from the lawless violence———
James. Of Buckie—ere another week be sped
His head shall ornament the Tolbooth bars.
I thank you, friend; another came to aid,
One Master Young.
Buc. A kinsman of this house—
A priest, as I've been told. Poor Malcolm Young!
He suffers like the rest.
James. The rest of whom?
Buc. Of all Sir Adam claims as kith or kin.
I knew another kinsman—a poor youth,
Whose father dying, left him to the care
Of his rich brother; store of lands and gold
Went with the orphan to Sir Adam's ward.
The orphan lives; the lands and gold are gone,
To add another hillock to the mountain
The usurer has heaped up.
James. The orphan lives?
How gained Sir Adam all the orphan's wealth?

Buc. By a false will—by an extorted gift;
By threats, by stratagem, by forced consent.
I know him well.

James. Where lives the orphan youth?

Buc. Nowhere; he has no house save the huge home
Roofed by o'erarching Goodness, for the poor:
He sleeps upon the moor—beside the hedge,
Under the wall; an outcast, broken man.

James. How can all this be proved?

Buc. Why, face to face—
The accuser and the accused; but in this realm
Wealth has such power, it adds another fold
To the thick bandage over Justice' eyes,
Blunts her sword point, and makes unfixed her scale.

James. It shall not, as I live! "Her eyes shall be
"Free from the thinnest veil of gossamer—
"Her sword shall be as trenchant as my own—
"Her scales as equal between rich and poor
"As light or cold." But I will hold you bound
To give consistence to these dark appeals,
That rise like clouds between Sir Adam's fame
And his King's favor. Sir, you saved my life;
But if you wrong my subject, by the heaven
'Neath which we live, the saints that from their thrones
Send help to the bared arm of righteous kings!
I swear your head shall be the forfeiture
Of failure in your proof! [*Crosses to* L.]

Buc. Agreed—agreed!
You'll see him as he is.

"*James.* Your words are strong,
"As if they sprang from truth. I came to prove
"Sir Adam Weir; through him to reach the hearts
"Of higher men. The saddest heart alive
"Would be as careless as a lark's in June
"Compared to mine, if what my fear portends
"Proves true. Sir Adam Weir has wealth in store—
"Is crafty, politic, and is of weight—
"The words are his—with certain of our lords.
"*Buc.* I told you so." I know he has deep dealings
With——

James. Name them not; from their own lips I'll hear
Their guilt; no other tongue shall blot the fame

Of James's nobles. If it should be so;
If the two men I've trusted from my youth—
If Hume—if Seton—let the rest go hang!
But Seton, my old playmate—if he's false,
Then break, weak heart; farewell my life and crown!—
I pray you, meet me here within an hour:
This very night I shall have need of you.
And as you speak as one brave man should speak
To another man, albeit he is a king,
I will put trust in you; and, ere the morn,
You shall impeach Sir Adam in our court,
And woe betide the guilty! [*Crosses*, R.] Say no more;
I meet you here again.

Buc. If I appear
At Holyrood, I trust your royal word,
No ill shall hap me. I am free to come,
To go?

James. Not so, by heaven! If you should fail,
You die.

Buck. I know it; but your royal safeguard
Bars me from other dangers?

James. You've my word—
You have my hand; the honour of a king,
The promise of a man. Come boldly on.
Though you were stained with murder double dark,
You shall have free departure from our court.

Buc. But if I prosper in my proof, I claim
Reward.

James. It shall be yours.

Buc. Oblivion
Of all I may have done; and, better far,
Permission to draw sword at James's call,
And die, if there be need, at James's side.

James. Go, go! I pray you may succeed, good fellow!
Poor James can ill afford so stout an arm.
Go, now; I'll call you when I've seen Sir Adam.
[*Exit Buckie*, L.
Thus ever from the true heart of the Commons,
Wells up pure love and loyal faithfulness,
While in the bosom of our lords, such stream
Is choked, or turbid, or runs quickly dry.

Enter SIR ADAM WEIR, R., *with a packet.*

Sir A. Good master—but I have not asked your name
James. Albyn—James Albyn.
Sir A. [*Gives him the packet.*] Here is a sealed-up packet,
Go with it, as you promised, to the court.
The King will be in Holyrood three days,
Assembling forces on the Boroughmuir.
The nobles will be all in Edinburgh;
Open this roll, and, as occasion serves,
Deliver to each peer whose name is in it,
The note enclosed—'twill gain you noble friends—
And bring me answer.
James. Good Sir Adam Weir,
I trust there is no treason in this charge?
Sir A. Treason! What's treason? If some politic lords
Find a repugnance in their Christian hearts
Against the war, and long for blessed peace——
James. Who made them judges or of peace or war?
The country has been trod 'neath English heels.
Sir A. So says the fiery King; but wiser men
Would rather see the heel upon the soil
That leaves a mark of gold where it is placed,
Than risk their lives and fortunes at the beck
Of choleric James, and angry France and Rome.
James. Now, by the saints!—but no; I will not speak.
Sir A. Why, friend, what matters it to you and me?
You shall have rich reward; and for myself,
My payment will be found in a pure heart
And conscience clear.
James. [*Aside.*] In an axe-blade, perhaps,
Or a sword's edge, or—faugh!—a yard of rope.
I take the packet.
Sir A. Do; and fare-you-well. [*Exit*, R.
James. Shall I break ope the seals, and see at once
Who are the enemies I've nursed and fed?
They find repugnance in their Christian hearts
To war!—they find a longing in their hearts
For English gold. But if the few I love—
The two brave hearts that I have trusted ever—

Are true to me, as I have been to them,
Then let the traitors range themselves at once
On Henry's side, and join the Douglases,
The curses ever of our kingdom's strength;
I'll meet them in the field! But first, I'll fling
Scorn and dishonour on their recreant heads;—
This roll shall be brought forward in full court,
And the same bold accuser that lays bare
The crimes of this wise trickster, shall appal
The false, base lords.—Their hearts! their Christian hearts! [*Laughing scornfully.*

Enter Buckie, R.

Buc. I've watched his going.

James. [*Gives him the packet.*] Take the packet, sir!
At vesper chime to-night we hold our court;
Come to us then; present this in our presence
Boldly; heed not the frowning of our lords.
By Heaven—if 'twere our brother or our son
That owned the dealing, he should taste the axe!
At the first chiming of the vesper bell,
I wait you. Answer not, but meet me then.
[*Exeunt, James,* L., *Buckie,* R.

Scene II.—*A Room in Laichmont House.*

Enter Sir Adam Weir *and* Madeleine, R.—*During this Scene, Sir Adam struggles to repress his rage.*

Sir A. And was I harsh to my poor Madeleine?
It is my love that makes me harsh to you.
"You know I love you—that I've ever loved you;
"And trust me, 'tis because I love you still,"
I would constrain you to your happiness.

Made. There is no happiness on earth for me.

Sir A. Come, speak not so! I'm three-score years and five;
"My hair is white, my eyes are growing dim;"
My strength is wasted in the toils I've past
To make you happy. You're the richest heiress
In all the country. After all I've done,
You will not see me wretched?

Made. If my death

Could make you happy, I would give my life,
And bless you as I die.
Sir A. Tush! not your life,
It is your hand I want. I wish to see you
The Lady of the Land; "to see you placed
"On such a pinnacle of wealth and greatness,
"That you may look with pity on the pride
"Of starveling earls. Why, girl, you shall be girt
"With one rich belt of glittering diamonds,
"That might pay armies in an emperor's quarrel.
"You shall have gold and jewels; and the looms
"Of Genoa shall groan beneath the weight
"Of richest robes to deck your loveliness."
Made. The painted sepulchre of a breaking heart.
Sir A. Heart? breaking heart?—who spoke of breaking hearts?
Made. I did.
Sir A. Be silent!—but, dear Madeleine,
You would not see my white hairs in the dust
Before you, to entreat you to be kind.
'Tis I, your grandsire—your poor, kind, old grandsire.
You'll yield? you'll marry as I ask you?
Made. Marry?
I marry?—oh, sir, have some touch of pity;
My head is weak; I feel not as I used—
There is a weight about my heart. Oh, spare me!
Speak not of marrying.
Sir A. Girl!—but—no, dear child,
What change has come upon your joyous mood?
'Twas only yesterday I watched your step,
The gayest step that ever fell, like light
Upon the bended grass; your voice was sweet
With the heart's laughter. Wherefore are you changed?
Made. Something—no, nothing; I was foolish then—
I had no thought. Oh, sir, I'd wish to live
In old St. Ninian's, 'mid the holy nuns,
In some calm cell, afar from busy sounds,
With but my book and beads—to live and weep;
"To gaze from the lone casement to the sky,
"Where angels live and are at rest for ever;
"And pray to be like them." Sir, let me go!
Sir A. "What madness has possessed you? Hear me, girl:

"There's something in this change—I know not what;
"But it boots nothing, whatsoe'er it be."
You shall not to St. Ninian's; it was not
To heap up wealth for a complaining nun
I ran such ventures; risk'd my life so often—
My soul, my very soul! I would be kind,
I try to speak with kindness! [*After an effort.*] I am kind—
I'm in no passion; I am calm, you see.
Well, then, if you obey not, you shall starve;
"Though you come begging for a crust of bread,
"Shivering across the moor, and hold your hand,
"Your withered, shaking hand, and ope your lips,
"White with despair, and want, and poverty,
"To entreat one crust—one crust to save your life.
"You shall not have it; you shall starve, and die.
"And now you understand me, what I am:"
Take your own choice! But, see how calm I am.
I'll send a friend to counsel you; he'll tell you
The sin of disobedience: Malcolm Young——
Made.——Not him—not Malcolm Young!
Sir A. Why not, I pray you?
"He's a good youth, and yielded to my wish,
"And therefore you despise him." Malcolm Young
Shall give you counsel; and if he too fail,
The failure shall be visited on *him*;
Mark me—on him; if you refuse consent
He shall be houseless, friendless as yourself.
Now, then, the fate of both is in your hands.
"I'm calm—I'm very calm; and Malcolm Young
"Shall be a beggar if you baulk my wish. [*Exit* L.
Made. [L. C.] "I'll hie me to the monastery door,
"And ask the meek-eyed nuns to take me in;
"And it shall be my grave; and the thick walls
"Shall keep me from the world; and in my heart
"I'll cherish him, and think on all his looks,
"Since we were children—all his gentle tones;
"And when my weary breast shall heave no more,
"I'll lay me down and die, and name his name
"With my last breath." I would we both were dead,
For we should then be happy; but on earth
No happiness for me—no hope, no hope!

Enter WIDOW BARTON, LAIRD SMALL, *and* MUNGO, R.

Widow. Cousin, the gentlemen are come to see you;
They've drunk your health; you should be much obliged
To Mister Small. This is the lady, sir,
Your young intended.

Mun. Very well, indeed;
True Brussels lace, and—ain't it Venice silk?
[*Touches Madeleine's gown.*]
I think 'tis Venice silk. I have a doublet
Of the same piece. How goes it, pretty maid?

Laird. Gadso! he's quite a polish'd courtier.
I wish you joy—you're a most lucky woman.

Mun. She courtesys with an air; though, for my part,
I like the Spanish swale, as thus, [*courtesys*] low, low;
Not the French dip, as thus, [*courtesys*] dip, dip;
Which think you best?

Made. Sir! did you speak to me?

Mun. Did I? 'pon honour—yes, I think I did:
"Some like the Austrian bend, [*courtesys*] d'ye like it so?
"Our girls, the Hamiltons, have got it pat;
"No sooner do I say, 'Sweet Lady Jane,'
"And draw my feather so, and place my hand
"Here on my heart, 'Fair Lady Jane, how are ye?'
"But dip she goes, and bend [*courtesys*]; but if an ass,
"Some fribble she don't like, comes near her, lo!
"A swale! [*courtesys*] 'tis very like this gentlewoman
"I hope there's no one near you, you don't like?
"For if there is, 'fore Gad! an 'twere my father,
"I'd cut him into slices like cold ham,
"As thin as that."

Laird. "Gadso! pray Gad it ain't;
"I hope it ain't his father—he would do it!"
He's such a youth!

Widow. He's a most gallant man;
I like to hear about great people's doings.

Mun. Do you?—a decent woman, for the country;
Then I will tell you anything you like.

Widow. Tell Madeleine about a tournament.

Laird. Pray do! Gadso, I love to hear your tales.
"Pray Gad I could be young again!

"*Mun.* Hush, do:

" You keep the ladies waiting. Well, fair dames,
" The trick is this : James sends to Hume and me,
" And Seton, and some other cavaliers,
" That he will keep the ring against all comers,
" And Cassilis, Maxwell, Eglinton, and others—
" A famous tilter is Lord Eglinton,
" And noble heart as beats on Scottish ground—
" They send that they will come !
" *Laird.* Gadso !—gadso !"
I knew a Spanish man—I think his name
Was Don—but what comes after Don—go on——
Mun. [*To Made.*] But you don't like to hear of broken bones !
Widow. She does, indeed ! and I delight in it ;
I've got a dozen cures for broken bones.
Mun. Well, then, the day arrives ; we take our places ;
" James in the centre, Sinclair and myself,
" Full arm'd, with spear in rest, and visors down,
" On his right hand ; Hume and Lord Seton ride
" Upon his left. All round us sits the court :
" The ladies' cheeks all flush'd, or pale by turns,
" As we take one stout gallop round the ring."
The trumpet sounds four notes—ta ! ra ! ta ! ra !—
" And sudden at the further end appear
" Five knights in armor. With their lances' points
" They touch our shields—I should have said our shields
" Hang at the gate—Ha, ha, boys !—is it so ?"
Spur goes the steed !—my shield is ringing yet
From Maxwell's touch : I brace it on my arm.
The trumpet sounds again—ta ! ra ! ta ! ra !—
We stoop our heads—we bend us to the mane,—
My spear goes into splinters on his mail.
And, ha !—what's that ?—poor Maxwell reels awhile
Then plump upon the earth—I've done for him.
Laird. Gadso ! I'm in a sweat—a parlous arm—
You would not think it, ma'am, to look at him !
Widow. Oh ! he's a valiant knight. And rides the king
Like other men ?
Mun. He ought to ride as well—
He's been well taught ! I broke his chesnut horse,
That was too hard to manage : he rides well—
" Yes, pretty well ! I don't like his rein hand,

"He holds it far too low; but he rides well.
"[*To Madeleine.*] You're not alarmed at what I'm speak
ing of?
"Tis all in sport; if 'twere in earnest, ma'am,
"I'd split Lord Maxwell as he were a herring,
"Were he the biggest knight in Christendom."
Widow. And do the ladies scream?
Mun. Sometimes they do.
Once! 'twas at Sterling—James was in the ring,
And ran with—but I will not mention names—
The man he ran with, was—but never mind:
James came full speed—I never saw a horse
Spring better; every breath was hushed with fear:
The other man, he rode a Spanish barb,
Light, fiery, active; and when James came on
With lifted sword, I spurred on the right side,
Jinked so; and—as he passed, with a back hand,
Clipt his white plume—there was a scream heard then!
Widow. Was't you? were you the man?
Mun. Ha! said I so?
Then it was I!
Laird. Gadso! he's such a boy!
I can't make out where he has learned such arts;
For ere he went to court, two months ago,
He could not stick upon a pony's back,
And would have sooner died than draw a sword!
Widow. People get wondrous knowledge in a court.
Laird. Gadso! you're right. [*To Madeleine.*] I think you
never saw
A better, or more gallant cavalier,
Than my son, Mungo!
Made. Sir!
Laird. Gadso! you look
As if you scarcely heard what we've been saying.
Made. What is it you would say? I pray you, sir,
To tell me what you want? I would begone.
Laird. Speak to her, Mungo; Gadso! he's a tongue
Makes way with women.
Mun. Don't look at us, then;
They're very bashful, these poor country girls.
Laird. [*To Widow.*] Gadso!—pray, ma'am, walk aside
with me;

He's such a boy! pray Gad you've such a boy!

Widow. I, Sir?

Laird. If you should wed—come this way, ma'am.

[*Exeunt Laird and Widow*, L.

Mun. They're gone! we're quite alone! you may speak out—
I see you've been impatient to get rid
Of the old twaddles. Don't be timid, now;
There!—don't be shy—you never saw in your life,
A man of the court before!

Made. Oh, leave me, Sir!

"If you were man—but you are not a man—
"Or gentleman—or even the thing you seem,
"A courtier, you would leave me. Leave me, sir!"

Mun. What! when so many robbers are abroad?
What if that villain, Buckie of Drumshorlan,
Forced his way in, and I not here to guard you?

Made. I care not though he came.

Mun. Oh, don't you, though?
No wonder. You need care for nothing now,
When I am here. They say the rascal wears
A great wolf's head, and looks with dreadful eyes
Under its gaping jaws! What step was that?

Enter SERVANT, L.

Serv. Sir, there are strangers seen about the grounds—
We think they're Buckie's band. Pursue them, sir!

Mun. Pursue them?—hark, friend; have you e'er a garret
In this old house?

Serv. Yes, sir.

Mun. I've such a sight!
I see a hare in her seat! I'll watch the rogues,
This way; are these the stairs? the general
Stands always on a hill.

Serv. I cannot wait. [*Exit*, R.

Mun. Hem! well—she never looks at me—here goes!

[*Runs off*, L.

Enter MALCOLM YOUNG, R.

Mal. Your grandsire bids me see you, Madeleine;

Made. Malcolm!

Mal. I never wished to see you more.
If we had parted—when we parted last—
In kindness, I would never more have sought
Your presence; never heard your voice again.
But when you asked my hand, I—I—believe me,
'Twas from no change, no want of true affection—
'Twas from—'twas—will you take my hand now, Madeleine?

Made. Are you about to leave us?

Mal. Yes, I go
Where I shall see you never—never more:
I go to hide my sorrows.

Made. Malcolm!

Mal. Pray you,
Let me but say farewell—but do not speak—
Once I could dwell on every word you said,
And treasure it like a sweet cherished tune,
To be conned over in my solitude;
But now, I would not hear your voice, nor see
Your smile——

Made. You will not see me smile again!

Mal. I cannot bear to look upon your face,
Where I have fed my eyes, dear Madeleine;
Do you remember two long years ago,
When I was leaving Laichmont, how we walked
To the Green Den, and how you stooped and gathered
Beside the burn, a sprig of blooming heath?

Made. Yes!

Mal. Here it is! I've had it near my heart
Since then; and both are withered. Madeleine,
I asked you not to speak, but I am changeful;
I'd hear your voice again, for the last time!
Say but a word!

Made. Oh, Malcolm!

Mal. "Shall I say
"How constantly my thoughts shall rest on you?
"Ah, Madeleine! when we used—long, long ago—
"To look up to the moon, as we do now,
"It was with happier eyes. I little knew
"What memories of grief I gathered then,
'To feed on in my heart for evermore;"
And now!—God's blessing be around you ever!

The blessing of a heart that—fare-you-well! [*Crosses*, L.
Made. Malcolm! you leave me, it is come at last;
See! I can bear our parting: thus is broke
The chain that linked us from our infancy.
And here—it is the last time we shall meet
On this cold earth—though we shall meet again
There, where the stars are shining calm and clear!—
And we are dead to one another, Malcolm!
Take with you to your solitude, the thought
That I—oh, pardon, Heav'n! if it is sin—
Have never loved but you—love only you!
Mal. What! heard I right? You loved me? love me?
Heavens!
This is too much to bear. My fondest hopes
Reached not so high. I was an orphan, poor,
Unfriended; I but dared to think of you
As of some higher nature, till the veil
Fell from my heart, and—when the vow was spoken,
And I was—what I am—I knew I loved!
"Oh, but to dare to love!—though without hope!—
"To dare to love, and feel it is no crime!"
Dearest!—I know not what I say—once more
Tell me you love me—no, no! tell me not!
It turns to poison on your lip, and kills.
Made. Malcolm! now let us part—as suits us both,
Calmly—as best beseems our misery.
Go; be you happy!—you cannot be happy—
I feel it in my heart—but, be at peace.
I bear my sorrow meekly. On your hand
I place my lips—I bless you—and farewell!
[*Exeunt, Madeleine*, R.; *Malcolm*, L.

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

Scene I.—*Holyrood—The King's closet.*

Enter an Attendant, R. *conducting* Bishop.

Atten. His grace will not be long ere he returns.
Please you, be seated.

Bishop. Guard well the prisoner. [*Exit Attendant*, L.]
On the eve of war
To leave his foes unwatched—his very camp
A scene of treason; but I've laid my hand
On every loop in the net. 'Tis like the king—
Some playful hiding in a burgher suit—
I thought he had been sobered. That's his step.

Enter James, L.

James. Ha! my good lord—but we're unfitly geared
For shrift and penance; we have rid for the life
Up hill—down dale. But you look big with care.
Out with it; "it will burst you."
"*Bishop.* It befits
"Neither my years nor my great calling, Sir,
"Nor the meek spirit that should harbour here,
"To mix in the fierce struggles in a court.
"*James.* I know you well. Excuse me, good my Lord,
"If, with the flippant quickness of the tongue,
"I hide the respect and deep reverence,
"Which my heart bears to the right reverend virtues
"Of meekness, truth, and most sweet gentleness,
"I've ever found in you."
Bishop. Ah, Sir! I'm old—
It may be that my time is nearly done—
But I would fain, even to the end of my life,
Bear you true service; for I've mark'd in you
Ever, from boyish days, a loving heart—
Loving, though fiery; and most merciful—
Too merciful!
"*James.* Nay; not so, my good Lord.
"Ill fares it with kings' swords when the sharp blade
"Shines oftener in the subject's dazzled eyes,
"Than the pearl-studded heft and jewell'd sheath.
"*Bishop.* There may be times when the steel blade is all
"That gives true value to the jewelled sheath."
James. How mean you? You were my preceptor, Sir—
Most kind—most wise: but you have told me often
I lack'd the bridle, not the spur.
Bishop. The bridle,
In your wild course of dalliance and deray;

The spur, in action fitting for a king.
James. Not so—by Heaven! not so. Show me the deed
You'd have me do that's fitting for a king,
And, though it tore the softest string i' my heart,
I'll do it. [*Crosses to* R.
Bishop. Prepare you, then!
James. What is't, I say?
You think I have no higher, nobler thoughts,
Than suit a pageant king on silken throne?
My lord, you know me not.
Bishop. What would you do
If treachery——
James. Pah! you know of treachery, too.
Fear not, my Lord—I'm glad 'twas only that!
Whew!—my mind's easy now. Why, my good Lord,
I thought 't had been some terribler thing than that.
Bishop. Than what, my liege?
James. You'll see—you'll see; fear not.
I tell you a king's eye can see as clear
As a good bishop's. Ere three hours are fled,
There will be proof. Come to our court at nine;
You'll see some action then that fits a king;
And, as you go, send me Lord Seton.
Bishop. Seton!
No; save in keeping of the guard.
James. My Lord,
Say that again: perhaps I heard not right.
I told you to send Seton—my friend Seton—
Lord Seton—and you answered something. What?
Bishop. That he's the traitor I would warn you of.
James. Seton a traitor? Seton, that I've loved
Since we were boys! Ho! Seton!—Rest you, Sir;
You shall avouch this thing.—Seton! ho! Seton!
Bishop. My liege, I've proofs.
James. What say you?—proofs?
Bish. Ay, proofs,
Clearer than sunlight.

Enter Attendant, L.

James. [*With dignity.*] Take our greeting, Sir,
To the Lord Seton—we would see him here.
[*Exit Attendant,* R.

Proofs! and of Seton's guilt! Can it be so?
He was my friend—from five years old—so high;
We'd the same masters, played at the same games—
Coits—golf. Fool! fool! to think that anything
Can bind a heart. I thought his heart was mine,
His love—his life—and to desert me now! [*Crosses to* L.
Viper! He shall not live to laugh at me—
At the poor king that trusted. Viper—dog!
My Lord, this thing you say is full of proof?
Bishop. Ay, Sir. Be firm.
James. Firm! There's no tyrant king
That flung men's hearts to feed the beasts i' the circus;
That tore men's limbs with horses for their sport;
That sent men to the tigers, and looked on
To see them quivering in the monster's claws,
Was half so firm—so pitiless!

Enter Seton, R.

You're here!
Seton. Welcome, kind liege, to Holyrood again!
James. Back—back—keep off me! We're your king,
Lord Seton!
We will be just—we were in anger late.
We're calm.—Though it should burst my heart in twain,
I will be calm. [*Aside.*]
Seton. My liege, what means this change?
I am not used to hear so harsh a voice
From my kind master—from my friend!
James. Not that!
By heaven, we're friend to not a man on earth!
No—never more!
Seton. You are unjust to me.
You wrong me—oh, you wrong me, Sir!
James. [*Aside.*] Oh, heaven!
That I should hear a traitor borrow thus
John Seton's voice, and look through Seton's eyes!
Now, then, my lord; what say you of this man?
Bishop. That he deceives you.
Seton. I? you false-tongued—but,
Forgive me my rough speech; you wear a garb
That checks my tongue.
James. In what does he deceive?

Bishop. He and Lord Hume——
James. What! he, too? Where's Lord Hume?
Bishop. I blame not him, my liege!
James. No. Is he true?
Send me Lord Hume: I'd see at least one man
That keeps his faith!
Seton. My liege, I know not yet
What charge the good Lord Bishop brings against me:
But, if 'tis breach of faith, of love to you,
I will not say he lies—but it is false.
James. Say on—say on; be sure your proof is strong;
For this is such an hour, I would not live it,
For all the wealth of earth. Quick! Have it o'er!
Bishop. You bear command, Lord Seton, of the host?
James. He does!
Bishop. And yet you entertain advice
With English Dacre. Nay, deny it not;
I've seen the messenger in close discourse
At night, within your tent. I know his errand,
For I have trusty watchers in the camp.
James. Do you deny this?
Seton. I cannot deny——
James. Villain! you can't deny! Oh, shame—oh, shame!
Where will you hide you? But go on—we're calm.
Bishop. His errand was to offer you great sums
Of English gold.
James. Was this his errand?
Seton. Yes.
James. And your base coward sword sprung not at once
Forth from the sheath? You did not slay the man?
Seton. No!
Bishop. And he sent a message back to Dacre,
And gave the envoy passage, and safe conduct.
James. Is all this true?—Oh Seton, say the word,
One little word—tell me it is not true!
Seton. My liege, 'tis true.
James. Then by the name we bear,
You die!—a traitor's death! [*Crosses*, R.] Sirrah! the guard.
I will not look again to where he stands.

Enter Guard, r. : *they stand by* Seton, l. c.

Let him be taken hence—and let the axe
Rid me of——Seton ! is it so in truth,
That you've deceived me—joined my enemies ?
You—you—my friend—my playmate !—is it so ?
Sir, will you tell me wherein I have failed
In friendship to the man that was my friend ?
I thought I loved you—that in all my heart
Dwelt not a thought that wronged you.

Seton. You have heard
What my accuser says, and you condemn me—
I say no word to save a forfeit life—
A life is not worth having, when't has lost
All that gave value to it—my sovereign's trust !

James, [*to the Bishop.*] You see this man, Sir—he's the self-same age
That I am. We were children both together—
We grew—we read in the same book—my lord,
You must remember that ?—how we were never
Separate from each other ; well, this man
Lived with me, year by year ; he counselled me,
Cheered me, sustained me—he was as myself—
The very throne that is to other kings
A desolate island rising in the sea—
A pinnacle of power, in solitude,
Grew to a seat of pleasance in his trust.
The sea, that chafed all round it with its waves,
This man bridged over with his love, and made it
A highway for our subjects' happiness—
And now ! for a few pieces of red gold
He leaves me. Oh, he might have coined my life
Into base ingots—stript me of it all—
If he had left me faith in one true heart,
And I should ne'er have grudged him the exchange.
[*Crosses,* r.
Go, now. We speak your doom—you die the death !
God pardon you ! I dare not pardon you—
Farewell.

Seton. I ask no pardon, Sir, from you.
May you find pardon—ay, in your own heart,
For what you do this day !

Bishop. Be firm, my liege.
James. Away, away, old man!—you do not know—
You cannot know—what this thing costs me. Go!
I'm firm.
Seton. Who is it that accuses me?
'Tis like your noble nature to be sudden;
I thought you just no less.
James. Ha! hear you that?
Bring on your proof. Though his own tongue confess'd
Enough to whet the dullest axe to a point—
Where is that envoy?
Bishop. He is here, my liege.
James. Bring him. [*Exit Bishop*, R.
Let the Lord Seton stay.

Enter Bishop *and English* Messenger, R.

How now?
You came with message from Lord Dacre's camp?
Mes. From the Lord Dacre's self—so please you, Sir;
But will Lord Seton's letter of safe conduct,
Bear me in surety?
James. Have no fear, my friend:
His letter of safe conduct! What contained
Your message to Lord Seton?
Mes. A free offer
Of twenty thousand marks.
James. For what—for what?
Mes. To stay inactive, or lead off the force,
When brought to face our army.
James. Was it so?
To leave me fenceless! and he answered you
Kindly—he paused a little, just a little,
Before he struck his king, his friend, to the earth.
Out with it all!—He gave you a message back?
Is't so—is't so?
Mes. Yes, please your majesty.
James. I knew it!—a few phrases—a regret—
A fear—a hope; but he agreed at last.
Tell me the answer he sent back to Dacre.
Bishop. [*Shows a letter.*] Here is the very letter—I laid hold of it
On the man's person.

James. Read, read, good Lord Bishop,
Blink not a word of it—a syllable;
Deliver it as we were Dacre's self.
Now, what says Seton, that degenerate Scot?
Bishop. [*reads.*] *This is my answer to Lord Dacre's message:*
I trample with my heel on your foul bribe—
I send you scorn, and hatred, and defiance.
James. More, more!
Bishop. I cast my glove into your face,
And summon you to meet me, foot to foot,
When flies the Scottish banner on the Tweed
On Monday morn——
James. Go on!
Bishop. I call you slave,
To think to wean me from my loyalty,
My truth, my honor to my trusting King.
James. Ha!—was it so? Go forth, good messenger,
Bear you this chain of gold. [*Hurries the messenger out,* R
My Good Lord Bishop
What meant you?—but no, no—you meant it well;
Go mind your priests, my lord,—meddle no more
In things like this. Keep to your duties, Sir;
Bid not your priests be "firm"—tell them to be
Gentle, forgiving, trustful, but not firm;
No more—no more. [*Hurries the Bishop out,* R.
Guards, leave my friend, Lord Seton.
[*Exeunt Guards,* R.
Now we're alone! Come, Seton! Seton, here!
To my heart. [*They embrace.*] Why said you nothing?
Seton. For I knew
Your justice 'self would be the pleader for me.
James. Ah, Seton, what a shock it gave my heart,
To think that you had left me. Pardon it;
It was because I trusted you the most,
That the blow fell so heavy. I was wrong,
And you'll forgive me; all my life shall be
A recompense for the vile thought that dwelt
But for ten minutes,—not a minute more,—
In my weak heart; but tell me you'll forgive it.
Seton. Forgive it, my good liege,—
James. I know you will,

For I will earn it of you with such trust
As never king had in his friend before.
Seton. Others, my liege, are false——
James. ——Ha! that they are!
But fear not; you and Hume are by my side.
I'll baulk the traitors yet. Oh, I'll be firm—
Firm as the Bass, rugged as Ailsa crag.
I shall know all ere long. Send fifty horse
To one Sir Adam Weir's, near Calder town;
Bring every soul that's found within the house,
"The old man himself; a widow, Mistress Barton;
"His kinsman, Malcolm Young; a fair young girl,
"Called Madeleine; an old simpleton, Laird Small,
"And his son Mungo,—fail not one of them—"
Bring them all here; and call a court at nine,
Fail not—and have our guard in double force;
The headsman ready—it may chance our work
Be bloody, if we're firm. Fail not at nine;
And now farewell. [*Exeunt, James,* R., *Seton,* L.

Scene II.—*A Room in Laichmont House.**

Enter Sir Adam Weir, *and* Malcolm Young, R.

Sir A. What said you to your cousin, Madeleine?
Does she consent to follow your advice?
She would be wise to do it.
Malcolm. I did not dare
To intrude upon her grief.
Sir A. (L. C.) You did not dare?
Did I not tell you, Sir, to use the power
That use, that old acquaintance gave to you,
To bend her to my will?
Mal. (R. C.) You told me, Sir——
Sir A. And you've not done it? and affect fine scruples,
As if you could not dare to touch her grief!
Sir, when I give the order, you must dare
To send her grief to the four winds of heaven,
And make her do my will. Her grief—her grief!
What is her grief?

* The whole of this scene is omitted at the Park Theatre—though it was represented—and, we believe, with considerable effect—at the Princess's.

Mal. Alas, I cannot tell!
Sir A. And no one else. She has a heart untouched
By liking, for she ne'er has spoke to man
Save you; and, therefore, why should she refuse
Her hand where I've determined to bestow it?
"Moss-Holm, with its broad meadows and rich haughs,
"Is settled on her, on her marriage day;
"The management—the rents, are in my hands:
"Moss-Holm and Laichmont, if conjoined in one,
"Were a fit holding for a belted earl.
"Now hear me farther: If success should crown
"My efforts, in a cause which scarce can fail,
'There is sure promise of a rank and name
"To me; and failing other heirs—to her—
"To Madeleine—the lady Madeleine—
"The Baroness of Laichmont!—she shall wed
"No bold ambitious springald, that might mar
"My rising, with some crotchet of his own;"
I must have Laichmont and Moss-Holm conjoined.
Now, let her marry this young popinjay,
Or be an outcast! Did you tell her this?
Mal. Something of this she knew.
Sir A. I know she did,
I told her so. Does she consent, I ask?
Mal. She did not tell me she would give consent.
Sir A. You did not ask her. Am I thwarted thus?
Have you the insolence to tell me this?
Know you what I have been to you?
Mal. I do.
Sir A. And know you what it is you are?
Mal. I do.
Sir A. Well, then—why spoke you not to Madeleine,
To change her purpose?
Mal. For I could not do it.
Sir A. You *would* not. You're a kinsman, Malcolm Young—
A penniless, unfriended kinsman, Sir;
Know you 'twas I that moved the Cardinal
To give you priesthood?
Mal. Yes, I know it was.
Sir Adam Weir, let us have no mistake:
You asked me, if I knew what you had been:

I told you yes. You asked me, if I knew
Who I was, and I told you, yes, again.
You taunt me that I'm friendless—that I'm poor;
You boast you moved the great Lord Cardinal
To make me priest. I *am* a friendless man;
I'm poor; I am a priest—and would to Heaven
That I had died the day that made me so!
You've crushed my heart. I will not curse you, Sir,
But I will bid you look into your breast—
What see you there? Oh, Sir, is there no thought
Of all the wrecks you've made of Peace—of Hope—
Of Trust and Innocence?

Sir A. How mean you, Sir?

Mal. Nay, hear me out. When all that I possessed—
It was not much, but it was all I had—
Was lost in the great bark in which you sailed,
When you were shipwrecked on the Spanish coast——

Sir A. I know, I know; you doubt not I was wrecked?
I have the proofs.

Mal. When all I had was lost,
And I was doomed to eat the bitter bread
Of grudging kindness, you assumed a right
To guide me: I was plastic in your hands:
I turned my sprit from its loved pursuits—
The steed—the sword—and bent it to the toil
Of midnight study; half forgot myself
To stone, and weeded from my heart away
All memories—so I thought—of what had been.
Sir, all these memories have sprung again,
Fresh! Oh, they rush like a red lava-flood
Into my soul—they boil up to my brain!
Man, that I trusted! tyrant, who has made
My life a desert, and my heart a tomb!
I warn you, make not others miserable,
As you've made me. I'm a roused man. Beware!

Sir A. What is't you know? Of what must I beware?

Mal. I tell you, every tear that I have shed,
Rises to Heaven against you, like the voice
Of blood! for Sorrow has a cry for Vengeance
On him who caused it, as the voiceless lips
Of murdered men call out to Righteous Heaven
Against their murderer! There's an hour shall come—
It may come quickly.

Sir A. What do you suspect?
Mal. Nothing. I've no suspicions; but I know.
[*Exit*, L.
Sir A. What is't he knows? Can he have heard it said
There was no wreck—and that I kept it all?
It cannot be—no, no—the proofs are good.
And Madeleine, too, the meek-souled Madeleine,
The worm I've trampled, turns on me at last.
What has she learned?—does she know all? Well, well,
What if she does? she's but a silly girl,
And men will laugh at her, if she but breathe
A word against my name. No; she shall wed.
Oh, she will pine, for she's of noble thoughts,
When married to the fool. But all Moss-Holm
Is mine—is mine! and all my dreams come true.
[*A noise heard.*
What tramp is that of horsemen in the court?
Can Albyn be returned? And will the lords
Do as Lord Dacre bids them? Will they take
The English bribes, and leave the fiery James
Unfriended, powerless? Then, my game is won!
No danger more; rank, fortune, all my own;

Enter LAIRD SMALL, MUNGO, *and* WIDOW, R.

Laird. Gadso! it's very kind in good King James
Sir A. What is it, Sir?
Laird. It's very kind, Gadso!
He's heard of Mungo's marriage, and commands
His presence, and his bride's; Gadso, 'tis kind!
I thought not Mungo such a favourite.
Sir A. (L. C.) Your son is silent, Sir.
Laird. [*To Mungo.*] Why don't you speak?

Enter OFFICER, R.

Offi. The King commands you with all speed to court.
Laird. Gadso! you don't seem pleased. I'll bet you, now,
James has some famous tournament afoot,
And want's to run a course with you himself.
Mun. (R. C.) With me—a course?
Laird. [*To Sir Adam.*] I told you he was a boy!
Sir A. What means all this? what is it you would say?

Laird. The king has sent for us: for you and me,
And Mungo, and good Widow Barton, here.
Gadso, he deigns to give the bride away
With his own hand; so says the messenger!
Mun. Father, when we arrive at Holyrood,
Don't say a word about the tournament.
Laird. No? Does the King not like it? few folks do,
To be reminded of discomfitures.
I knew a captain of—but never mind,
He ran away from Flodden. Gadso, Sir!
If you said anything that began with F,—
Physic, philosophy, no matter what—
Gadso, he flew in such a passion, Sir.
Sir A. I'll not to court: I'm old; I am not well.
Offi. I must require you to make no delay;
We must reach Holyrood ere vesper chime.
Sir A. [*Aside.*] Is it, then, true, this fool is loved by James?
Why, then, so much the better. [*Aloud.*] If the king
Commands, we must obey.
Widow. What, I? Sir Adam!
My silk is at the dyer's, the old puce;
It's to be black; I wish it had come home,
How can I look upon a king, dressed thus?
Oh! it will be high treason. Where's my cousin?
I'll borrow her green satin. Madeleine!
Where is she gone to? Cousin Madeleine! [*Exit,* L.
Mun. Father, you'll not speak any nonsense, now,
About my breaking in King James's horse?
Laird. Why not? It was a goodly piece of service;
I wish you had done the same to my old mare;
She laid me in a ditch.
Mun. I wish the King
Would leave folks to get married for themselves.
Offi. I must remind you—
Sir A. You had best make haste
To obey the summons. I am quite prepared.
Laird. The King is very kind—exceeding good.
Come, Mungo, we'll go on; the bride will follow.
Gadso! I'm thankful to the King. Come, boy!
[*Exeunt omnes,* R.

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Audience Chamber in Holyrood; folding-doors at the back; a side-door,* R.; *throne,* L. C.

"JAMES *seated apart. The* COURTIERS *in groups. The* "LORDS *observing him.*

" *Somer.* [*To Kil.*] His grace is heavier than his wont.
" *Kil.* He looks
" All round, first upon one, then on another,
" As he would dive into their hearts.
" *Somer.* See, now!
" How he is gazing on Lord Seton's face.
" *James.* Seton!
" *Seton.* Your Majesty!
" *James.* Come near me, Seton!
" What is't detains the Cardinal so long?
" 'Tis no such mighty work; a ready pen
" And a good will should make it minutes' business.
" *Seton.* I'll seek his grace.
" *James.* Bid him despatch. [*Exit Seton,* R.
" [*To Hume.*] A word—
" The escort is returned from Laichmont?
" *Hume.* Yes.
" *James.* With the whole household of Sir Adam Weir?
" *Hume.* They wait your summons in the ante-chamber.
" *James.* Well, let them wait awhile; we've other mat-
" ters
" That need our ordering first. I'll call them soon.
" *Kil.* [*To Somerville.*] A smile—the first I've seen on him to-day.
" *Somer.* I trust he has no doubt.
" *Kil.* His looks are sad,
" Not doubtful. He is of a trusting nature.
" *Somer.* When comes the messenger from Dacre's camp?
" *Max.* I trust, ere long; I like quick settlements.
" And, by the Lord! if Dacre plays us false,
" And sends not the instalment due this week,
" I'll join the King!
" *Kil.* Oh! he will send the coin.

" *Re-enter* Seton.

" *James.* Well—well ?
" *Seton.* The papers are prepared ; his grace
" Attends you.
" *James.* Bring him. With your leave, my lords,
" We'll have some private conference with the cardinal.
[*Exeunt Lords, &c., through the folding-doors.*

" *Enter* Archbishop—Usher *at the door.*

" *James.* Is it prepared ? All signed, and duly sealed ?
" You stand not on your scruples ? Give it me !
" *Archbishop.* [*Giving a parchment.*] 'Tis here, my liege.
" *James.* And nothing left to do,
" But write the name of the recipient ?
" Here is the blank—I will insert the name.
" I thank you for this act.
" *Archbishop.* I know not, Sire,
" If in this cause I strain not the full powers
" Held from the holy father. Oh, bethink you,
" Ere 'tis too late, how great a thing you ask !
" *James.* 'Tis a stout arm—a gallant heart I ask,
" That you have nearly robbed poor Scotland of.
" Why, you can find a score in every parish,
" With hands as qualified to handle tithes,
" And lips as eloquent in Homilies,
" But scarce so quick an eye, so true a sword,
" In all the land ! I can't afford him, Sir ;
" And so I thank you, good Lord Cardinal—
" You give me back a soldier.
" *Archbishop.* [r. c.] And strip off
" The holy panoply that guarded him
" From sin. Oh, Sir !—it is not yet too late :
" Bethink you—you lay bare to the assaults
" Of Satan, the poor heart that lay secure
" Behind the blessing of the church. Your hand
" Launches again the bark—that lay in safety
" In a calm haven—out into the sea,
" Where storms are raging, and the waves are high—
" The bark may founder ! Give me back the deed !
" *James.* Not for my crown ! What ho ! Bring to our
presence

"The man I told you of. [*Exit Usher, c.*
"*Arch.* So true a love
"As James shows ever to the holy See
"Moves me to do his bidding in this thing;
"Your Majesty will see in it a proof
"Of how your zeal is valued.
"*James.* [*Who has been reading the deed.*] All correct!
"Naught but the name to add.

Enter Malcolm Young.

"Come hither, Sir.
"We have heard such good report of your deservings,
"That we think fit, as a discerning king—
"Whose eyes should ever watch upon the worth
"Of his true subjects, to bestow reward
"On the well-doer—to advance your rank.
"How stand you in the Church?
"*Mal.* My gracious liege,
"Pardon me. To have earned my sovereign's praise—
"If such I've done, I know not by what means—
"Is all I hope.
"*James.* Do you refuse our favour?
"*Mal.* My liege, I have no higher wish on earth
"Than to attain your favour.
"*James.* What rich stalls—
"What prebends are now vacant? You're too young
"To be a bishop; yet there may be times
"When youth is no impediment. How say you?
"*Mal.* I wish no station in the church, my liege;
"Rather I wish to lay aside the place
"I hold e'en now, and in some silent cell
"To hide me from the world. I pray your grace,
"Hold me excused. I have no wish for power,
"Or wealth, or honour.
"*James.* You're a foolish youth—
"Some day-dream blinds you. Kneel to the Archbishop!
"*Mal.* To ask his grace's blessing ere I go——
"*James.* Nay—to receive promotion. Kneel, I say!
"*Mal.* [*Kneeling to the king.*] I pray your Majesty——
"*James.* 'Tis not to us—
"Kneel to his grace the Archbishop. Kneel not here—
"Kneel there!

"*Mal.* [*Rising.*] I cannot kneel in such a cause.
"*James.* No? We must ask you in a suppliant's voice.
"Look on us.
"[*Malcolm recognises the king, who takes off his cap.*
"Why, good fellow, did you think
"We had no gratitude for ready help?
"Kneel, Sir?
"*Mal.* For pardon to your Majesty.
"I knew not, I suspected not, my liege—
"Oh, if you would not see me die before you,
"Wring not a heart that's so deep weighed in grief,
"It has no other sense!
"*James.* Then won't you trust me?
"I would not add an atom to your grief.
"Try me! Why, Malcolm, you've no memory.
"Have you forgotten how we swore our friendship?
"And how fair Madeleine——
"*Mal.* Oh! name her not!
"I cannot hear her name.
"*James.* But you shall hear it!
"I'll name no other name, unless you kneel!
"I'll call out Madeleine—and naught but Madeleine—
"If you won't kneel! Come, get upon your knee,
"While I essay my rusty penmanship
"In writing Malcolm—M A C O M!—[*Writes.*]
"Young—Malcolm Young. Kneel to the Cardinal.
"*Mal.* I'm so amazed—bewildered! Good my liege,
"You bruise a spirit that, oppressed already——
"*James.* [*To the Archbishop.*] Give him the deed!
"[*Forces Malcolm to kneel.*] Kneel, sirrah! on your knee!
"[*Holds him down.*] There! there!
"[*The Archbishop gives him the deed; James raises and embraces him.*
"Come to my heart; you are a man!
"[*As he leads him towards the folding doors.*
"Now, then, we face the enemy together.
"In weal or woe you'll never leave my side,
"Nor chill, nor falter in your truthfulness
"To your true fellow-soldier, and kind king.
"Nay, answer not—I know your very heart!
"[*To Usher.*] Admit Sir Adam Weir, and wait our coming.
"[*Exit with Malcolm, through folding doors.*

" *Usher goes to the side door. Enter* LAIRD SMALL, SIR
" ADAM WEIR, MUNGO, WIDOW BARTON, MADELEINE.
" *Sir Adam stands apart from the others; courtiers in*
" *groups; lords passing to and fro; Usher at folding*
" *doors.**

Laird. Gadso! Come, Widow Barton, leave my son
To throw sweet looks at mistress Madeleine,
Well! what a thing it is to have a boy
Like Mungo. He's a boy!
Widow. I never thought
To be so honored—me at Holyrood!
In such apparel! Mr. Mungo, Sir,
Seems in high favor.
Laird. Favor! gadso—yes!
He's liko——who's the fat fellow with one eye,
The Cardinal, in England,—he has a son,
A butcher—Wolsey; he's liko Cardinal Wolsey.
Widow. A wondrous gentleman.
Laird. (*To Usher.*) Pray you, good sir,
When will the doors be opened?
Usher. When the king
Comes forth to give you welcome. Are you all
Arrived? Where is Sir Adam Weir?
Sir A. (L. C.) I'm here.
Widow. What a white face my uncle has!
Laird. Poor man,
He has no son in favor with the king!
" *Widow.* But soon will have a grandson.
" *Laird.* So he will,
"Gadso! a grandson—that is Mungo Small,
"My son, his grandson—gadso! what relations
"Are we then? Tis a question."
Mun. [*To Made.*] How I wish
This were well over! Don't you wish it were?
Made. What is it? It concerns not me.
Mun. Oh, don't it?
That's all you know. Didn't the messenger

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* In the representation, the fifth act commences here:—*Laird Small, Widow Barton, the Usher, Madeleine, Mungo,* and *Sir Adam* being discovered grouped upon the stage as the curtain rises. The scene is the audience chamber, as already described.

Tell father, that the king—God save the king!
Out of affection to a friend of his—
He did not name him,—I won't name him, either—
Was fixed to be your bridesman at the wedding?
Laird. [*Overhearing.*] Gadso! That's to reward you for your skill,
Unhorsing Maxwell at the tournament.
Mun. Hush, father!
Laird. Or, perhaps, for breaking in
His Spanish horse?
Mun. I never broke it in.
Father, don't speak to James. Pray, widow Barton,
Would you take Madeleine's arm. I'd say a word
Into my father's ear. [*Goes up with Laird.*
Widow. [*Going up to Madeleine.*] Why don't you go
T'your grandsire, girl?
Made. I will remain alone.
Widow. It is not seemly on a wedding day
To look so solemn.
Made. This is not a day
Of wedding or rejoicing.
Widow. Oh! it is;
The king has made a law, that you're to marry
Young Mr. Small.
Made. I have not long to live;
I pray you leave me to my solemn thoughts—
You cannot share them.
Usher. Hush! the king!—the king! [*They retire.*

The folding doors are thrown open. James *advances in state, and takes his seat on the throne. All the Lords, Bishops, Ushers, &c. follow*

James. [*To Seton.*] Are the guards doubled in the outer ward?
Seton. Yes, trebled.
James. That is well—the headsman's ready?
Seton. He is.
James. What lacks it to the vesper chime?
Seton. A minute or two.
James. How bold their lordships look!
I think I'll humble some of them ere long,—
I'll teach them to take Dacre's bribes!

Somer. (R. C.) He speaks
Angrily!
Kil. I would rather see him angry
Than knitting his thick brow, and saying nothing—
A dog can't bite while it is barking.
Usher. [*To Kilmaurs.*] Sir,
A man is at the door, and claims admittance.
Kil. What man?—the king is busy. Tell the man
To come another time.
Somer. Who is it, Usher?
Usher. A common man, I'm told.
Kil. Tell him to go
To the devil. What business have these common fellows
With courts at all?
Usher. He insists on coming in!
Kil. Tell them to flog him up the Canongate.
James. What's that?—you seem in trouble, Lord Kilmaurs.
Kil. Why, 'tis some clownish clodpole tries to force
His way to see your highness.
James. Ope the doors!
Let him come in. God's mercy, good my lords!
Why stand we here, and wear upon our brows
The Scottish crown, if lives the Scottish man
That may not claim our help? Let him come in.
[*Exit Usher*, C.
Maxwell. [*To Somerville.*] I hate this constant courting of the commons,
It bodes no good to the nobility.
Somer. I trust this expedition to the borders
Will teach him better.
Max. He'll be a luckier man
Than any of his fathers, if he lives
To boast that he can trample on his peers.

Enter USHER *und* BUCKIE, *with a wolf's jaws on his head*, C.

James. How now? Who are you in such masquerade?
Good Usher, who is this?
Mun. [*Coming forward.*] It's Buckie, Sire,
The robber of Drumshorlan.
James. Guard the door!
What brings you here? By'r lady, 'tis too much

To beard us on our throne! Let him not stir.
Buc. My liege, the palace gate shall open wide
To let me go, when I but say the word.
James. It shall be opened when *I* say the word,
To take your felon body up the street
To the Tolbooth.
Buc. I shall be free as air!
You will not say that word.
James. What warrant, knave,
Have you for boast so idle?
Buc. James's word—
I need no other safeguard.
James. What's your quest?
Buc. Justice!
James. Dog! is't to mock us you are come
To talk of justice in a court? My lords!
Where should we be if every man had justice?
Where should we be, Kilmaurs—Grey—Somerville?
Somer. I like not this beginning. Who is this?
Kil. I know not; but the king seems hot in wrath.
Max. [*To them.*] He's a known robber!
Somer. He'll be in a string.
Dancing at the Tolbooth in half an hour.
Kil. That's where he means we all should be.
James. A bold knave,
Seton! he braves it well. [*To Buckie.*] What are you, caitiff?
Buc. Some six years since, I would have said a man,
But now I know not what to call myself.
An outcast! a poor Scottish Ishmaelite,
My hand against all men, and all men's hands
'Gainst me.
James. And now you make a claim on us
For justice? Against whom?
Buc. Against a man
Here in this presence; rich in the world's respect,
Wise, honoured——
James. And his name?
Buc. Sir Adam Weir!
James. How? now be careful! He's a man esteemed,
Nobly befriended, truthful, honourable;
My lords! he must be known to some of you,

Why bear you not your witness for your friend?
[*To Seton, aside.*
See how their conscience keeps them silent, Seton!
Sir A. My liege, I know not what this ruffian means,
Or wherefore he pollutes your Grace's ear
With accusations unsustained by proof;
But let him speak—I need have little fear
Of such accuser.
James. No! Go on, Sir Knave.
Buc. I do impeach this man, Sir Adam Weir,
That he, of wilful and deliberate choice,
Did make his kinsman, George—his brother's son—
A robber!
Sir A. It is false! the boy is dead.
Buc. He stript him of his substance, taught his heart
To be a glowing furnace of fierce thoughts,
And to forget all blissful lenity—
All tenderness, all hope, all trust, all pity:
He made him be an outcast, till his soul
Grew hard and rugged as the desolate moors
Where his grim trade was plied. He changed his nature
Into a wolf's—his sleep into a hell,
Filled with dark fiends, that pointed to the Past!—
And of these crimes do I accuse this man.
James. What say you to these plaints, Sir Adam Weir?
Sir A. That they are false; fit for the felon's heart
They come from! If my nephew were alive
He would disprove these baseless calumnies.
"My liege, 'tis no light thing to load with sham
"The hoary head of an old man. My name
"Can stand a greater shock than the attack
"Of robbers, such as this. I wronged him not—
"Not of the value of the smallest coin—"
I loved him, I was kind and good to him
Ever; from boyhood up. Nay, had he lived,
He would be equal sharer of my wealth
With my poor child, my grandchild, at my side.
Buc. But he does live—to meet you front to front—
Here! [*Throws back the wolf's head.*] I am he.—What! not a word to me,
Kind uncle?
James. [*Aside.*] O ho! is it so, my friend?

I scarcely looked for you in garb like this.
Buc. My liege, my loving uncle holds his tongue;
Will he be silent still when I make charge
Of other crimes—crimes, greater, loftier——
James. What mean you?
Buc. Treason! foul, unnatural treason!
James. How?
Sir A. I repel this villain's accusation—
This spendthrift robber. Oh, 'tis false, my liege;
I can appeal to my whole life; these lords,
I'm sure they'll speak for me; for years and years
Many have known me, they'll answer for me,—
For my good name——
James. And is it so, my lords?
Kil. [*After a pause.*] We can; we've known him a most worthy man.
Somer. We've known him for a loyal gentleman;
He has given proof——
Buc. Oh! here is more of proof,
If it be proof you want. I have command
To give these packets from Sir Adam Weir
Into the noble hands of certain peers.
Sir A. Ha!—no—'tis false! give them to me—they're mine.
James. No! on your life! My good Lord Somerville,
Bring me the packet.
Somer. [*disconcerted.*] 'Tis some foolishness:
I'll take the charge. [*Takes the packet from Buckie.*
James. Bring me the packet, Lord!
[*Somerville gives the packet unwillingly.*
James. [*Giving it to Maxwell.*] Here, Maxwell, break the seal—but your hand shakes!
Hume, lay it open! [*Hume opens the packet.*] Blessings on you, Hume!
Oh, what a thing is truth! Here, give it me!
[*James takes the packet.*
Now, by my soul, this is a happy time!
I hold a score of heads within my hands—
Heads—noble heads—right honourable heads—
Stand where you are! ay, coroneted heads—
Nay, whisper not! What think you that I am?
A dolt—a madman! As I live by bread,

I'll show you what I am! You thought me blind,
You called me heedless James, and hoodwinked James—
You'll find me watchful James, and vengeful James!
[*Hume marches in the Guard, with Headsman*, c.; *they stand beside the Lords, who form a group*, r. c.
[*Comes forward.*] One little word, and it will conjure up
The fiend to tear you. One motion of this hand—
One turning of the leaf—Who stirs a foot,
Is a dead man! If I but turn the leaf,
Shame sits, like a foul vulture on a corse,
And flaps its wings on the dishonoured names
Of knights and nobles.
[*A pause; the Lords look at each other.*
Nay, blench not, good my lords;
I mean not *you;* the idle words I say
Can have no sting for you! You are true men—
True to your King! You'll show your truth, my Lords,
In battle; pah! we'll teach those Englishmen
We are not the base things they take us for;
They'll see James and his nobles, side by side—
[*Aside.*] If they desert me now, then farewell all!
[*Aloud.*] There!—[*Gives the packet back to Somerville.*
I know nothing!

Sir A. (l. c.) I—my liege—at least,
Of deed so black, of crimes against your highness,
I'm innocent.

[*James looks looks sternly at him, and Sir Adam recognizes him as Albyn.*

James. You chose your messenger
With matchless skill. Old man, the saddest sight
That mortal eye can see, is the white head
That knows not truth. Away! we mark your words,
That you make equal portion of your wealth
Between your nephew and your grandchild. Go!
[*Walks up the stage.*

Max. My neck feels rather stiff yet, from the sight
Of that long axe.

Somer. He's of a noble heart.

Max. My lords, I'll fight. 'Tis safer fight Lord Dacre,
Than take his coin.

Kil. But not so pleasant.

James. [*Returning*, l. c.] Now

To happier scenes. Come hither, Master Small;
You wish to wed this lady?
Laird. (R. C.) That he does,
Gadso! so please you—and she loves him, too—
They'd kiss each other through a hole in the wall,
Like—I forget his name; and—never mind!
James. And you, as father of the happy bridegroom,
Give your consent?
Laird. Consent! Gadso; oh, yes,
'Twill make them happy. [*To Mungo.*] Where's your tongue gone to?
Please you, my son—my Mungo's more at home
In tournaments, and breaking in your horse——
Mun. Hush!—hush!
Laird. Gadso!—you told us so yourself—
Didn't he, Widow Barton?
James. "[*To Lords.*] Good my lords,
"Please you, draw back a space."
[*The Lords retire—James goes to Madeleine,* L. C
How say you, maiden?
You look not on the bridegroom you have chosen,
With loving eyes, as would beseem your state—
Come, come; you're bashful; turn your glowing eyes
On the enraptured Small!
Laird. [*Pushing Mungo.*] Gadso!—go nearer—
The King is making love for you himself.
James. You do not answer.
Made. If your majesty
Knew what a sense of misery was here,
You would not speak as now.
James. Why not, I pray you?
Is not your bridegroom fair to look upon?
Noble in bearing, with a stately step,
Like a young lion in his native wood?
See!
Made. Oh! my liege!—spare me this mockery!
I never looked upon the creature's face,
Nor listened to his voice;—far other thoughts
Were in my heart.
James. But you will wed the youth?
Made. Rather I'll wed my grave.

James. [*To Mungo.*] Why, she won't have you!
How's this. I thought she loved you, Master Small!
Mun. Well, so I thought.
Laird. Gadso!—and so she did;
She could not help it. Every body loves him
He's such a one at tournaments.
Mun. Be quiet!
Laird. And all the ladies blushing, flushing, winking
You must have seen it in the Stirling lists,
When he snipt off your royal plume.
James. My what?
Laird. Your plume—your feather—a back-handed blow!
James. What's this, friend Small?
Mun. My father had a stroke
Of apoplexy,—he's had curious fancies since.
James. I think so has the son. If you're a tilter,
I'll find you horse and spear; and Captain Buckie
Shall hold you for three runs.
Buc. (R. C.) With all my soul.
Mun. Not for a million ducats! I can't ride
More than a meal-bag—never couched a spear—
I'm——
Laird. Gadso?—who has apoplexy now?
James. Better arrange the duel.—Gentle maid.
Have you no recollection of a friend? [*Shows her the scarf.*
Or of the scarf you wrapt about his head?
Made. You?—oh, forgive my freedom!—good my liege,
I knew you not.
James. Would you refuse your help
To a cracked skull, because it was a king's?
Ah! for your sake, I've thought of Malcolm Young,
And raised him to a rank that he deserves.
Made. I trust he will be happy.
James. That he will!
I make no doubt he'll be the happiest man
On Scottish ground. But you must clear your brow—
He'll not be happy if you're dull and sad.
Made. I, Sir? Think not of me. I shall be gone
And in the silence of some cloistered place
Pray for my King and him!
James. Tut! tut! not so.

You shall put on the brightest of your smiles,
You shall sing loudest, laugh the merriest;
You must leave priests to prayers and orisons;
I've fixed upon a husband you must wed!
Mun. Is't me, Sir?
James. Out, you puppy!—If you saw—

Enter Malcolm c., *nobly dressed; led by* Hume *and* Seton.

Malcolm—or one his very image—free
From priestly vows, led forward to your side,
And kneeling at your feet—What then?
Made. My heart.
Knows nothing but its own sorrow.
James. Would you not
Deign but one look on the poor youth?
Made. My looks
Are consecrate to Heaven. I would not look.
James. And if he knelt and took you by the hand,
And called your name, and said—
Mal. My Madeleine!
Made. Ha! 'twas his voice!—
James. It is himself, my girl!
[*Touches Malcolm's shoulder with his sword.*
A knight—rise up, Sir Malcolm—and no priest;
The good Lord Cardinal has loosed his vows.
Mal. And is it so? and do I clasp you thus?
Oh, this is too much happiness!
James. Good friend,
It will not last too long; be not afraid:
In a few months, you'll bear it very well;
So, in the meantime, make the most of it.
Somer. [*Approaching with Lords.*] My Liege!—
James. Not yet, my good Lord Somerville.
[*To Seton.*] How looked our yeomen, when they heard our name
On the Boroughmuir, to-day?
Seton. They tossed their caps,
High in the air, and swore they'd follow you——
James. Blessings upon them!
Seton. ——To the end of the world.
James. And you, my Lords?

Somer. We give you our true swords,
Our lives, our fortunes.
James. Say you so in truth?
Then, by my life, no king in all the earth
Can move our envy, or our fears, one jot.
The land is safe and unassailable,
Girt in a panoply of pierceless mail,
That's guarded by a brave nobility---
A loving people----
Seton. And true-hearted King!

[*Curtain falls.*]

DISPOSITION OF THE CHARACTERS AT THE FALL OF THE CURTAIN.

LORDS. SETON. KING. MALCOLM. MADELEINE.
R.] [L.

THE END.

No. XXVII.

MODERN STANDARD DRAMA.

EDITED BY EPES SARGENT.

Author of "Velasco, a Tragedy," &c

LONDON ASSURANCE.

A Comedy

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY DION. L. BOURCICAULT.

WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS, CAST OF CHARACTERS, COSTUMES, RELATIVE POSITIONS, &c.

AS PERFORMED AT THE PARK THEATRE.

NEW YORK:

WM. TAYLOR & CO., No. 2 ASTOR HOUSE,

AND JARVIS BUILDINGS, NORTH ST., BALTIMORE.

BOSTON:—REDDING AND COMPANY, 8 STATE STREET.
PHILADELPHIA:—G. W. ZEIBER AND CO., 3 LEDGER BUILDING.
NEW ORLEANS:—J. C. MORGAN, AND JOHN SLY.

1846.

PRICE 12 1-2 CENTS.

EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION.

This play may be set down as belonging to what a celebrated critic has called "the shabby-genteel school of comedy." Its success was at first accounted for by the unprecedented display of upholstery furniture, which attended its production both on the Covent Garden and the Park boards. The "properties" of the piece, including chairs, curtains, and divans, were of an unusually splendid description; added to all which, a Brussels carpet for the drawing-room scenes was no inconsiderable item in the novelties it presented. We fear that but for these external accompaniments, the play would not have had the run it experienced in this country.

And yet, it has its merits—such as they are. The French dramatic rule of condensing the incidents of every separate act into a single scene, is skilfully and ingeniously carried out. The character of *Dazzle* is a truthful and legitimate picture, to which, we doubt not, more than one original may be found among the chevaliers of European cities. The plot of the play is meagre, and wanting in interest, but sustained by a certain vivacity of tone and "smartness" of allusion, which renders the comedy amusing in the reading as well as in the representation. The business of the scene is rarely suffered to flag; and much tact is shown in the grouping of the characters. But when we have said thus much in its commendation, we cannot add more except what many will probably regard as the most emphatic praise we could offer, namely, the undisputed fact, that it has been one of the most popular and attractive comedies of the day.

A notable defect in the play, is the heartlessness and flippancy of its pervading tone. *Max Harkaway*, who is a mere repetition of the fox-hunting country gentleman of innumerable comedies, is the only individual of the *dramatis personæ* who seems to have the most distant notion of a moral obligation or a generous impulse. It is not the absence of "noble sentiments," but

of redeeming traits, to which we allude. The *Courtlys*, father and son, are weak, unprincipled libertines, the fool prevailing in one, and the scamp in the other. *Lady Gay Spanker* is a monstrous, and, we trust, a wholly imaginary creation. No woman of any pretensions to breeding or good sense, would treat a husband, were he even so much of an ass, in the manner she does. It is a libel upon decent society to suppose that it could tolerate such a creature. *Grace Harkaway*, from the fustian put into her mouth, is apparently intended for a romantic simpleton—the author has certainly succeeded in making her a very uninteresting one. *Meddle*, the lawyer, though a broad caricature, is a laughable one; and as members of his profession afford popular subjects for ridicule and abasement, the introduction of this part may have contributed materially to the favourable reception of the piece.

In all these pretended portraitures of some of the constituents of respectable English society, we look in vain for anything like earnestness of character. Not an indication does any one give that he is conscious of the possession of a soul. All appear to be playing a part—striving to *seem*, rather than to *be*. Emotion is voted vulgar; and a show of sincerity is evidently regarded as precluding the claims of the comedy to the title of fashionable. Such a play must always leave the heart unsatisfied, however it may interest the fancy. The dramatists of the last age did not write in this manner. Even the "School for Scandal", dazzling us as it does with unremitted scintillations of wit, that startle and delight the intellect, is not without its appeals to the better faculties of our nature. If we laugh at poor *Sir Peter*, he still occasionally claims our sympathy and respect. When *Charles Surface* refuses to sell his uncle's portrait, we experience a glow of satisfaction at the triumph of good and grateful feeling over the importunities of selfishness and the temptations of gain. But in the present play, the darker sides of human character are exclusively presented; and, on rising from the representation, we always feel, in spite of the elegant saloons and gilded furniture, that we have been in indifferently honest company. The climax of absurdity is reached, when the moralizing speech at the close on the qualities of a gentleman, is put into the lips of the old miscreant, who has just been disappointed in his design of running away with another man's wife. We have been told, how-

ever, that this speech was originally written for *Max Harkaway;* but that Farren, the actor, who played *Sir Harcourt*, isisted that it should be transferred to him; and the author, with the accommodating spirit of *Puff* in "The Critic," acquiesced in the demand.

"London Assurance" was first produced the 4th March, 1841, at the Theatre Royal, Covent Carden. It was brought out at the Park Theatre, New York, the 11th October ensuing, in quite a novel style of elegance, and ran an unusual number of nights. Mr. Placide, in his impersonation of *Sir Harcourt*, made what is technically termed a hit, and has been frequently called upon to repeat the part.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

	Covent Garden, 1841.	*Park*, 1841.
Sir Harcourt Courtly	Mr. W. Farren.	Mr. Placide.
Max Harkaway	" Bartley.	" Fisher.
Charles Courtly	" Anderson.	" Wheatley.
Mr. Spanker	" Keeley.	" Williams.
Dazzle	" C. Mathews.	" Browne.
Meddle	" Harley.	" Latham.
Cool	" Brindal.	" Andrews.
Simpson (Butler)	" Honner.	" King.
Martin	" Ayliffe.	" Howard.
Lady Gay Spanker	Mrs. Nisbett.	Miss Cushman.
Grace Harkaway	Madame Vestris.	Miss Clarendon.
Pert	Mrs. Humby.	Mrs. Vernon.

COSTUMES.

SIR HARCOURT COURTLY.—*First dress:* Brocade morning dress, red slippers, cap, &c.—*Second dress:* Black frock coat, gaiter pantaloons, cloak, and low hat.—*Third Dress:* Blue dress coat, pantaloons, white vest, and black stock.

MAX HARKAWAY.—*First dress:* Brown surtout coat, white vest, black trowsers, gaiters, and walking-stick.—*Second dress:* Black dress suit.

DAZZLE.—*First dress:* Green coat, drab gaiter pants, silk vest.—*Second dress:* Light drab overcoat.—*Third dress:* Blue dress coat, velvet vest, light blue pants, and stock.

CHARLES COURTLY.—*First dress:* Green coat, light gaiter pants, and cloak.—*Second dress:* Brown coat.—*Third dress:* Fashionable black suit.

MEDDLE.—Brown coat, white vest, dark pantaloons.

SPANKER.—*First dress:* Blue coat, dark vest, chequered pantaloons.—*Second dress:* Black dress coat and pants, white vest.

COOL.—*First dress:* Light coat, white vest, and black gaiter pants.—*Third dress:* Black frock coat.

SERVANTS.—Livery.

LADY GAY SPANKER.—*First dress:* Riding habit.—*Second dress:* Fashionable dinner dress.

GRACE HARKAWAY.—*First dress:* Fashionable morning dress.—*Second dress:* Handsome dinner dress.

The Scene lies in London and Gloucestershire in 1841.—*Time, Three days.*

AUTHOR'S DEDICATION.

TO

CHARLES KEMBLE,

THIS COMEDY,

(WITH HIS KIND PERMISSION,)

IS DEDICATED

BY HIS FERVENT ADMIRER AND HUMBLE SERVANT,

DION. L. BOURCICAULT.

LONDON ASSURANCE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Ante-Room in Sir Harcourt Courtly's House in Belgrave Square.*

Enter COOL, C.

Cool. Half-past nine, and Mr. Charles has not yet returned. I am in a fever of dread. If his father happens to rise earlier than usual on any morning, he is sure to ask first for Mr. Charles. Poor deluded old gentleman—he little thinks how he is deceived.

Enter MARTIN, *lazily*, L.

Well, Martin, he has not come home yet!

Mar. No; and I have not had a wink of sleep all night. —I cannot stand this any longer; I shall give warning. This is the fifth night Mr. Courtly has remained out, and I'm obliged to stand at the hall window to watch for him.

Cool. You know, if Sir Harcourt was aware that we connived at his son's irregularities, we should all be discharged.

Mar. I have used up all my common excuses on his duns.—'Call again,' 'Not at home,' and 'Send it down to you,' won't serve any more; and Mr. Crust, the wine merchant, swears he will be paid.

Cool. So they all say. Why, he has arrests out against him already. I've seen the fellows watching the door—[*Loud knock and ring heard.*]—There he is, just in time—quick, Martin, for I expect Sir William's bell every moment—[*Bell rings*]—and there it is. [*Exit Martin, slowly.*] Thank heaven! he will return to College to-morrow, and this heavy responsibility will be taken off my shoulders. A valet is as difficult a post to fill properly as that of prime minister. [*Exit*, L.

Young C. [*Without.*] Hollo!
Dazzle. [*Without.*] Steady!

Enter YOUNG COURTLY *and* DAZZLE, L.

Young C. Hollo-o-o!

Daz. Hush! what are you about, howling like a Hottentot. Sit down there, and thank heaven you are in Belgrave square, instead of Bow street.

Young C. D—n—damn Bow street.

Daz. Oh, with all my heart!—you have not seen as much of it as I have.

Young C. I say—let me see—what was I going to say? —oh, look here—[*Pulls out a large assortment of bell-pulls, knockers, etc., from his pocket.*] There! dam'me! I'll puzzle the two-penny postman,—I'll deprive them of their right of disturbing the neighbourhood. That black lion's head did belong to old Vampire, the money-lender; this bell-pull to Miss Stitch, the milliner.

Daz. And this brass griffin——

Young C. That! oh, let me see—I think I twisted that off our own hall-door as I came in, while you were paying the cab.

Daz. What shall I do with them?

Young C. Pack 'em in a small hamper, and send 'em to the sitting magistrate with my father's compliments; in the mean time, come into my room, and I'll astonish you with some Burgundy.

Re-enter COOL, L. C.

Cool. (R.) Mr. Charles——

Young C. Out! out! not at home to any one.

Cool. And drunk——

Young C. As a lord.

Cool. If Sir Harcourt knew this, he would go mad, he would discharge me.

Young C. You flatter yourself: that would be no proof of his insanity.—[*To Dazzle.*] This is Cool, sir, Mr. Cool: he is the best liar in London—there is a pungency about his invention, and an originality in his equivocation, that is perfectly refreshing.

Cool. [*Aside.*] Why, Mr. Charles, where did you pick him up?

Young C. You mistake, he picked *me* up. [*Bell rings.*

Cool. Here comes Sir Harcourt—pray do not let him see you in this state.

Young C. State! what do you mean? I am in a beautiful state.

Cool. I should lose my character.

Young C. That would be a fortunate epoch in your life, Cool.

Cool. Your father would discharge me.

Young C. Cool, my dad is an old ass.

Cool. Retire to your own room, for heaven's sake, Mr. Charles.

Young C. I'll do so for my own sake. [*To Dazzle.*] I say, old fellow, [*Staggering,*] just hold the door steady while I go in.

Daz. This way. Now, then!—take care!

[*Helps him into the room,* R.

Enter SIR HARCOURT COURTLY, L. C., *in an elegant dressing-gown, and Greek scull-cap and tassels, &c.*

Sir H. Cool, is breakfast ready?

Cool. Quite ready, Sir Harcourt.

Sir H. Apropos. I omitted to mention that I expect Squire Harkaway to join us this morning, and you must prepare for my departure to Oak Hall immediately.

Cool. Leave town in the middle of the season, Sir Harcourt? So unprecedented a proceeding!

Sir H. It is! I confess it; there is but one power could effect such a miracle—that is divinity.

Cool. How!

Sir H. In female form, of course. Cool, I am about to present society with a second Lady Courtly; young—blushing eighteen; lovely! I have her portrait; rich! I have her banker's account;—an heiress, and a Venus!

Cool. Lady Courtly could be none other.

Sir H. Ha! ha! Cool, your manners are above your station.—Apropos, I shall find no further use for my brocade dressing-gown.

Cool. I thank you, Sir Harcourt; might I ask who the fortunate lady is.

Sir H. Certainly: Miss Grace Harkaway, the niece of my old friend, Max.

Cool. Have you never seen the lady, sir?

Sir H. Never—that is, yes—eight years ago. Having been, as you know, on the continent for the last seven years, I have not had the opportunity of paying my devoirs. Our connexion and betrothal was a very extraordinary one. Her father's estates were contiguous to mine;—being a penurious, miserly, *ugly* old scoundrel, he made a market of my indiscretion, and supplied my extravagance with large sums of money on mortgages, his great desire being to unite the two properties. About seven years ago, he died—leaving Grace, a girl, to the guardianship of her uncle, with this will:—if, on attaining the age of nineteen, she would consent to marry me, I should receive those deeds, and all his property, as her dowry. If she refused to comply with this condition, they should revert to my heir-presumptive or apparent.—She consents.

Cool. Who would not?

Sir H. I consent to receive her 15,000*l.* a-year. [*Crosses*

Cool. Who would not? *to* L.

Sir H. So prepare, Cool, prepare;—but where is my boy, where is Charles?

Cool. Why—oh, he is gone out, Sir Harcourt; yes, gone out to take a walk.

Sir H. Poor child! A perfect child in heart—a sober, placid mind—the simplicity and verdure of boyhood, kept fresh and unsullied by any contact with society. Tell me, Cool, at what time was he in bed last night?

Cool. Half-past nine, Sir Harcourt.

Sir H. Half-past nine! Beautiful! What an original idea! Reposing in cherub slumbers, while all around him teems with drinking and debauchery! Primitive sweetness of nature! no pilot-coated, bear-skinned brawling!

Cool. Oh, Sir Harcourt!

Sir H. No cigar-smoking—

Cool. Faints at the smell of one.

Sir H. No brandy and water bibbing

Cool. Doesn't know the taste of anything stronger than barley-water.

Sir H. No night parading—

Cool. Never heard the clock strike twelve, except at noon.

Sir H. In fact, he is my son, and became a gentleman by right of paternity—he inherited my manners.

Enter MARTIN, L.

Mar. Mr. Harkaway.

Enter Max Harkaway, L.

Max. Squire Harkaway, fellow. or Max Harkaway, another time. [*Mar. bows and exit.*] Ah! Ha! Sir Harcourt, I'm devilish glad to see you! Gi' me your fist—Dang it, but I'm glad to see you! Let me see: six—seven years, or more, since we have met. How quickly they have flown!

Sir H. [*throwing off his studied manner.*] Max, Max! give me your hand, old boy.—[*Aside.*] Ah! he *is* glad to see me: there is no fawning pretence about that squeeze. Cool, you may retire. [*Exit Cool*, R. C.

Max. Why, you are looking quite rosy.

Sir H. Ah! ah! rosy! Am I too florid?

Max. Not a bit; not a bit.

Sir H. I thought so.—[*Aside.*] Cool said I had put too much on.

Max. How comes it, Courtly, you manage to retain your youth? See, I'm as grey as an old badger, or a wild rabbit; while you are—are as black as a young rook. I say, whose head grew your hair, eh?

Sir H. Permit me to remark, that all the beauties of my person are of home manufacture. Why should you be surprised at my youth? I have scarcely thrown off the giddiness of a very boy—elasticity of limb—buoyancy of soul! Remark this position—[*throws himself into an attitude.*] I held that attitude for ten minutes at Lady Acid's last *réunion*, at the express desire of one of our first sculptors, while he was making a sketch of me for the Apollo.

Max. [*aside.*] Making a butt of thee for their gibes.

Sir H. Lady Sarah Sarcasm started up, and, pointing to my face, ejaculated, 'Good gracious! does not Sir Harcourt remind you of the countenance of Ajax, in the Pompeian portrait?'

Max. Ajax!—humbug!

Sir H. You are complimentary.

Max. I'm a plain man, and always speak my mind. What's in a face or figure? Does a Grecian nose entail a good temper? Does a waspish waist indicate a good heart? Or, do oily perfumed locks necessarily thatch a well-furnished brain?

Sir H. It's an undeniable fact,—*plain* people always praise the beauties of the *mind*.

Max. Excuse the insinuation: I had thought the first Lady Courtly had surfeited you with beauty.

Sir H. No: she lived fourteen months with me, and then eloped with an intimate friend. Etiquette compelled me to challenge the seducer; so I received satisfaction—and a bullet in my shoulder at the same time. However, I had the consolation of knowing that he was the handsomest man of the age. She did not insult me, by running away with a damned ill-looking scoundrel.

Max. That, certainly, was flattering.

Sir H. I felt so, as I pocketed the ten thousand pounds damages.

Max. That must have been a great balm to your sore honour.

Sir H. It was—Max, my honour would have died without it; for on that year the wrong horse won the Derby—by some mistake. It was one of the luckiest chances—a thing that does not happen twice in a man's life—the opgortunity of getting rid of his wife and his debts at the same time.

Max. Tell the truth, Courtly—Did you not feel a little frayed in your delicacy—your honour, now? Eh?

Sir H. Not a whit. Why should I? I married *money*, and I received it—virgin gold! My delicacy and honour had nothing to do with it. The world pities the bereaved husband, when it should congratulate. No: the affair made a sensation, and I was the object. Besides, it is vulgar to make a parade of one's feelings, however acute they may be: impenetrability of countenance is the sure sign of your highly-bred man of fashion.

Max. So a man must, therefore, lose his wife and his money with a smile—in fact, every thing he possesses but his temper.

Sir H. Exactly; and greet ruin with *vive la bagatelle!* For example: your modish beauty never discomposes the shape of her features with convulsive laughter. A smile rewards the *bon mot*, and also shows the whiteness of her teeth. She never weeps impromptu—tears might destroy the economy of her cheek. Scenes are vulgar, hysterics obsolete; she exhibits a calm, placid, impenetrable lake, whose surface is reflection, but of unfathomable depth—a statue, whose life is hypothetical, and not a *prima facie* fact

Max. Well, give me the girl that will fly at your eyes in an argument, and stick to her point like a fox to his own tail.

Sir H. But etiquette, Max! remember etiquette!

Max. Damn etiquette! I have seen a man who thought it sacrilege to eat fish with a knife, that would not scruple to rise up and rob his brother of his birth-right in a gambling-house. Your thorough-bred, well-blooded heart, will seldom kick over the traces of good feeling. That's my opinion, and I don't care who knows it.

Sir H. Pardon me—etiquette is the pulse of society, by regulating which the body politic is retained in health. I consider myself one of the faculty in the art.

Max. Well, well; you are a living libel upon common sense, for you are old enough to know better.

Sir H. Old enough! What do you mean? Old! I still retain all my little juvenile indiscretions, which your niece's beauties must teach me to discard. I have not sown my wild oats yet.

Max. Time you did, at sixty-three.

Sir H. Sixty-three! Good Heavens!—forty, 'pon my life! forty, next March.

Max. Why, you are older than I am.

Sir H. Oh! you are old enough to be my father.

Max. Well, if I am, I am; that's etiquette, I suppose. Poor Grace! how often I have pitied her fate! That a young and beautiful creature should be driven into wretched splendour, or miserable poverty!

Sir H. Wretched! wherefore? Lady Courtly wretched! Impossible!

Max. Will she not be compelled to marry you, whether she likes you or not?—a choice between you and poverty. [*Aside.*] And hang me if it isn't a tie! But why do you not introduce your son Charles to me? I have not seen him since he was a child. You would never permit him to accept any of my invitations to spend his vacation at Oak Hall,—of course, we shall have the pleasure of his company now.

Sir H. He is not fit to enter society yet. He is a studious, sober boy.

Max. Boy! Why, he's five-and-twenty.

Sir H. Good gracious! Max,—you will permit me to know my own son's age,—he is not twenty.

Max. I'm dumb.

Sir H. You will excuse me while I indulge in the process of dressing. Cool!

Enter Cool, r.

Prepare my toilet. [*Exit Cool*, l.] That is a ceremony, which, with me, supersedes all others. I consider it a duty which every gentleman owes to society, to render himself as agreeable an object as possible: and the least compliment a mortal can pay to nature, when she honours him by bestowing extra care in the manufacture of his person, is to display her taste to the best possible advantage; and so, *au revoir*. [*Exit*, l. c.

Max. That's a good soul—he has his faults, and who has not? Forty years of age! Oh, monstrous!—but he does look uncommonly young for sixty, spite of his foreign locks and complexion.

Enter Dazzle, r.

Daz. Who's my friend with the stick and gaiters, I wonder—one of the family—the governor, may be?

Max. Who's this? Oh, Charles—is that you, my boy? How are you? [*Aside.*] This is the *boy*.

Daz. He knows me—he is too respectable for a bailiff. [*Aloud.*] How are you?

Max. Your father has just left me.

Daz. [*Aside.*] The devil he has! He has been dead these ten years. Oh! I see, he thinks I'm young Courtly. [*Aloud.*] The honour you would confer upon me, I must unwillingly disclaim,—I am not Mr. Courtly.

Max. I beg pardon—a friend, I suppose?

Daz. Oh, a most intimate friend—a friend of years—distantly related to the family—one of my ancestors married one of his. [*Aside.*] Adam and Eve.

Max. Are you on a visit here?

Daz. Yes. Oh! yes. [*Aside.*] Rather a short one, I'm afraid.

Max. [*Aside.*] This appears a dashing kind of fellow—as he is a friend of Sir Harcourt's, I'll invite him to the wedding. [*Aloud.*] Sir, if you are not otherwise engaged, I shall feel honoured by your company at my house, Oak Hall, Gloucestershire.

Daz. Your name is——

Max. Harkaway—Max Harkaway.

Daz. Harkaway—let me see—I ought to be related to the Harkaways, somehow.

Max. A wedding is about to come off—will you take a part on the occasion?

Daz. With pleasure! any part but that of the husband.

Max. Have you any previous engagement?

Daz. I was thinking—eh! why, let me see. [*Aside.*] Promised to meet my tailor and his account to-morrow; however, I'll postpone that. [*Aloud.*] Have you good shooting?

Max. Shooting! Why, there's no shooting at this time of the year.

Daz. Oh! I'm in no hurry—I can wait till the season, of course. I was only speaking precautionally—you have good shooting?

Max. The best in the country.

Daz. Make yourself comfortable!—Say no more—I'm your man—wait till you see how I'll murder your preserves.

Max. Do you hunt?

Daz. Pardon me—but will you repeat that? [*Aside.*] Delicious and expensive idea!

Max. You ride?

Daz. Anything! Everything! From a blood to a broomstick. Only catch me a flash of lightning, and let me get on the back of it, and dam'me if I would'nt astonish the elements.

Max. Ha! ha!

Daz. I'd put a girdle round about the earth in very considerably less than forty minutes.

Max. Ah! ha! We'll show old Fiddlestrings how to spend the day. He imagines that Nature, at the earnest request of Fashion, made summer days long for him to saunter in the Park, and winter nights, that he might have good time to get cleared out at hazard or at whist. Give me the yelping of a pack of hounds, before the shuffling of a pack of cards. What state can match the chase in full cry, each vying with his fellow which shall be most happy? A thousand deaths fly by unheeded in that one hour's life of ecstacy. Time is outrun, and Nature seems to grudge our bliss by making the day so short.

Daz. No, for then rises up the idol of my great adoration.

Max. Who's that?

Daz. The bottle—that lends a lustre to the soul!—When the world puts on its night-cap, and extinguishes the sun—then comes the bottle! Oh, mighty wine! don't ask me to apostrophise. Wine and love are the only two indescribable things in nature; but I prefer the wine, because its consequences are not entailed, and are more easily got rid of.

Max. How so?

Daz. Love ends in matrimony, wine in soda water.

Max. Well, I can promise you as fine a bottle as ever was cracked.

Daz. Never mind the bottle, give me the wine. Say no more; but, when I arrive, just shake one of my hands, and put the key of the cellar into the other, and if I don't make myself intimately acquainted with its internal organization—well, I say nothing—time will show.

Max. I foresee some happy days.

Daz. And I some glorious nights.

Max. It mustn't be a flying visit.

Daz. I despise the word—I'll stop a month with you.

Max. Or a year or two.

Daz. I'll live and die with you!

Max. Ha! ha! Remember Max Harkaway, Oak Hall, Gloucestershire.

Daz. I'll remember—fare ye well. [*Max is going.*] I say, holloa!—Tallyho-o-o-o!

Max. Yoicks!—Tallyhoa-o-o-o! [*Exit*, L.

Daz. There I am—quartered for a couple of years, at the least. The old boy wants somebody to ride his horses, shoot his game, and keep a restraint on the morals of the parish: I'm eligible. What a lucky accident to meet Young Courtly last night! Who could have thought it? Yesterday, I could not make certain of a dinner, except at my own proper peril; to-day, I would flirt with a banquet.

Enter Young Courtly, R.

Young C. What infernal row was that? Why, [*seeing Dazzle,*] are you here still?

Daz. Yes. Ain't you delighted? I'll ring, and send the servant for my luggage.

Young C. The devil you will! Why, you don't mean to say you seriously intend to take up a permanent residence here? [*Rings the bell.*

Daz. Now, that's a most inhospitable insinuation.

Young C. Might I ask your name?

Daz. With a deal of pleasure—Richard Dazzle, late of the Unattached Volunteers, vulgarly entitled the Dirty Buffs.

Enter Martin, r.

Young C. Then, Mr. Richard Dazzle, I have the honor of wishing you a very good morning. Martin, show this gentleman the door.

Daz. If he does, I'll kick Martin out of it. No offence. [*Exit Martin*, l.] Now, sir, permit me to place a dioramic view of your conduct before you. After bringing you safely home this morning—after indulgently waiting, whenever you took a passing fancy to a knocker or bell-pull—after conducting a retreat that would have reflected honor on Napoleon—you would kick me into the street, like a mangy cur; and that's what you call gratitude. Now, to show you how superior I am to petty malice, I give you an unlimited invitation to my house—my country house—to remain as long as you please.

Young C. Your house!

Daz. Oak Hall, Gloucestershire,—fine old place!—for further particulars see road book—that is, it *nominally* belongs to my old friend and relation, Max Harkaway; but I'm privileged. Capital old fellow—say, shall we be honoured?

Young C. Sir, permit me to hesitate a moment. [*Aside.*] Let me see: I go back to College to-morrow, so I shall not be missing; tradesmen begin to dun—

Enter Cool, r.

I hear thunder; here is shelter ready for me.

Cool. Oh, Mr. Charles, Mr. Solomon Isaacs is in the hall, and swears he will remain till he has arrested you!

Young C. Does he!—sorry he is so obstinate—take him my compliments, and I will bet him five to one he will not.

Daz. Double or quits, with my kind regards.

Cool. But, sir, he has discovered the house in Curzon

street; he says he is aware the furniture, at least, belongs to you, and he will put a man in immediately.

Young C. That's awkward—what's to be done?

Daz. Ask him whether he couldn't make it a woman.

Young C. I must trust that to fate.

Daz. I will give you my acceptance, if it will be of any use to you—it is of none to me.

Young C. No, sir; but in reply to your most generous and kind invitation, if you be in earnest, I shall feel delighted to accept it.

Daz. Certainly.

Young C. Then off we go—through the stables—down the Mews, and so slip through my friend's fingers.

Daz. But, stay, you must do the polite: say farewell to him before you part. Damn it, don't cut him!

Young C. You jest!

Daz. Here, lend me a card. [*Courtly gives him one.*] Now, then, [*writes:*] '*Our respects to Mr. Isaacs—sorry to have been prevented from seeing him.*' Ha! ha!

Young C. Ha! ha!

Daz. We'll send him up some game.

Young C. [*To Cool.*] Don't let my father see him.

[*Exeunt Young C. and Daz.*, R.

Cool. What's this? '*Mr. Charles Courtly, P.P.C., returns thanks for obliging inquiries.*' [*Exit*, L.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

Scene I.—*The Lawn before Oak Hall, a fine Elizabethan mansion; a Drawing-Room is seen through large French windows at the back. Statues, urns, and garden chairs about the stage.*

Enter Pert *and* James, L.

Pert. James, Miss Grace desires me to request that you will watch at the avenue, and let her know when the squire's carriage is seen on the London road.

James. I will go to the lodge. [*Exit*, L.

Pert. How I do long to see what kind of a man Sir Harcourt Courtly is! They say he is sixty; so he must be old, and consequently ugly. If I was Miss Grace, I would rather give up all my fortune and marry the man I liked, than go to church with a stuffed eel-skin. But taste is everything,—she doesn't seem to care whether he is sixty or sixteen; jokes at love; prepares for matrimony as she would for dinner; says it is a necessary evil, and what can't be cured must be endured. Now, I say this is against all nature; and she is either no woman, or a deeper one than I am, if she prefers an old man to a young one. Here she comes! looking as cheerfully as if she was going to marry Mr. Jenks! my Mr. Jenks! whom nobody won't lead to the halter till I have that honour.

Enter GRACE *from the Drawing-Room*, L.

Grace. Well, Pert? any signs of the squire yet?

Pert. No, Miss Grace; but James has gone to watch the road.

Grace. In my uncle's letter, he mentions a Mr. Dazzle, whom he has invited; so you must prepare a room for him. He is some friend of my husband that is to be, and my uncle seems to have taken an extraordinary predilection for him. Apropos! I must not forget to have a bouquet for the dear old man when he arrives.

Pert. The dear old man! Do you mean Sir Harcourt?

Grace. La, no! my uncle, of course. [*Plucking flowers.*] What do I care for Sir Harcourt Courtly? [*Crosses*, R.

Pert. Isn't it odd, Miss, you have never seen your intended, though it has been so long since you were betrothed?

Grace. Not at all; marriage matters are conducted now-a-days in a most mercantile manner; consequently, a previous acquaintance is by no means indispensable. Besides, my *prescribed* husband has been upon the continent for the benefit of his—property! They say a southern climate is a great restorer of consumptive estates.

Pert. Well, Miss, for my own part, I should like to have a good look at my bargain before I paid for it; 'specially when one's life is the price of the article. But why, ma'am, do you consent to marry in this blind-man's-buff sort of

manner? What would you think if he were not quite so old?

Grace. I should think he was a little younger.

Pert. I should like him all the better.

Grace. That wouldn't I. A young husband might expect affection and nonsense, which 'twould be deceit in me to render; nor would he permit me to remain with my uncle.—Sir Harcourt takes me with the incumbrances on his estate, and I shall beg to be left among the rest of the live stock.

Pert. Ah, Miss! but some day you might chance to stumble over *the* man,—what could you do then?

Grace. Do! beg *the* man's pardon, and request *the* man to pick me up again.

Pert. Ah! you were never in love, Miss.

Grace. I never was, nor will be, till I am tired of myself and common sense. Love is a pleasant scape-goat for a little epidemic madness. I must have been inoculated in my infancy, for the infection passes over poor me in contempt.

Enter James, L.

James. Two gentlemen, Miss Grace, have just alighted.

Grace. Very well, James. [*Exit James,* L.] Love is pictured as a boy; in another century they will be wiser, and paint him as a fool, with cap and bells, without a thought above the jingling of his own folly. Now, Pert, remember this as a maxim,—A woman is always in love with one of two things.

Pert. What are they, Miss?

Grace. A man, or herself—and I know which is the most profitable. [*Exit,* L.

Pert. I wonder what my Jenks would say, if I was to ask him. La! here comes Mr. Meddle, his rival, contemporary solicitor, as he calls him,—a nasty, prying, ugly wretch—what brings him here? He comes puffed with some news. [*Retires up,* R.

Enter Meddle, *with a newspaper,* L.

Med. I have secured the only newspaper in the village —my character, as an attorney-at-law, depended on the monopoly of its information.—I took it up by chance, when

this paragraph met my astonished view: [*Reads.*] 'We understand that the contract of marriage so long in abeyance on account of the lady's minority, is about to be celebrated, at Oak Hall, Gloucestershire, the well-known and magnificent mansion of Maximilian Harkaway, Esq., between Sir Harcourt Courtly, Baronet, of fashionable celebrity, and Miss Grace Harkaway, niece to the said Mr. Harkaway. The preparations are proceeding in the good old English style.' Is it possible! I seldom swear, except in a witness box, but, damme, had it been known in the village, my reputation would have been lost; my voice in the parlour of the Red Lion mute, and Jenks, a fellow who calls himself a lawyer, without more capability than a broomstick, and as much impudence as a young barrister after getting a verdict by mistake; why, he would actually have taken the Reverend Mr. Spout by the button, which is now my sole privilege. Ah! here is Mrs. Pert: couldn't have hit upon a better person. I'll cross-examine her—Lady's maid to Miss Grace,—confidential purloiner of second-hand silk—a *nisi prius* of her mistress—Ah! sits on the woolsack in the pantry, and dictates the laws of kitchen etiquette.—Ah! Mrs. Pert, good morning; permit me to say,—and my word as a legal character is not unduly considered—I venture to affirm, that you look a—quite like the—a——

Pert. Law! Mr. Meddle.

Med. Exactly like the law.

Pert. Ha! indeed; complimentary, I confess; like the law; tedious, prosy, made up of musty paper. You sha'n't have a long suit of me. Good morning. [*Going.*

Med. Stay, Mrs. Pert; don't calumniate my calling, or disseminate vulgar prejudices.

Pert. Vulgar! you talk of vulgarity to me! you, whose sole employment is to sneak about like a pig, snouting out the dust-hole of society, and feeding upon the bad ends of vice! you, who live upon the world's iniquity; you miserable specimen of a bad six-and-eightpence!

Med. But, Mrs. Pert——

Pert. Don't but me, sir; I won't be butted by any such low fellow.

Med. This is slander; an action will lie.

Pert. Let it lie; lying is your trade. I'll tell you what

Mr. Meddle; if I had my will, I would soon put a check on your prying propensities. I'd treat you as the farmers do inquisitive hogs.

Med. How?

Pert. I would ring your nose. [*Exit*, L.

Med. Not much information elicted from that witness. Jenks is at the bottom of this. I have very little hesitation in saying, Jenks is a libellous rascal; I heard reports that he was undermining my character here, through Mrs. Pert. Now I'm certain of it. Assault is expensive; but I certainly will put by a small weekly stipendium, until I can afford to kick Jenks.

Daz. [*Outside.*] Come along; this way!

Med. Ah! whom have we here? Visitors; I'll address them.

Enter Dazzle, L.

Daz. Who's this, I wonder; one of the family? I must know him. [*To Meddle.*] Ah! how are ye?

Med. Quite well. Just arrived?—ah!—um!—Might I request the honour of knowing whom I address?

Daz. Richard Dazzle, Esquire; and you——

Med. Mark Meddle, attorney-at-law.

Enter Young Courtly, L.

Daz. What detained you?

Young C. My dear fellow, I have just seen such a woman!

Daz. [*Aside.*] Hush! [*Aloud.*] Permit me to introduce you to my very old friend, Meddle. He's a capital fellow; know him.

Med. I feel honoured. Who is your friend?

Daz. Oh, he? What, my friend? Oh! Augustus Hamilton.

Young C. How d'ye do? [*Looking off.*] There she is, again!

Med. [*Looking off.*] Why, that is Miss Grace.

Daz. Of course, Grace.

Young C. I'll go and introduce myself.

[*Dazzle stops him*

Daz. [*Aside.*] What are you about? would you insult my old friend, Puddle, by running away? [*Aloud.*] I say,

Puddle, just show my friend the lions, while I say how d'ye do to my young friend, Grace. [*Aside.*] Cultivate his acquaintance. [*Exit,* L.—*Young Courtly looks after him.*

Med. Mr. Hamilton, might I take the liberty?

Young C. [*Looking off.*] Confound the fellow!

Med. Sir, what did you remark?

Young C. She's gone! Oh, are you here still, Mr. Thingomerry Puddle?

Med. Meddle, sir, Meddle, in the list of attorneys.

Young C. Well, Muddle, or Puddle, or whoever you are, you are a bore.

Med. [*Aside.*] How excessively odd! Mrs. Pert said I was a pig; now I'm a boar! I wonder what they'll make of me next.

Young C. Mr. Thingamy, will you take a word of advice?

Med. Feel honoured.

Young C. Get out.

Med. Do you mean to—I don't understand.

Young C. Delighted to quicken your apprehension. You are an ass, Puddle.

Med. Ha! ha! another quadruped! Yes; beautiful.—[*Aside.*] I wish he'd call me something libellous: but that would be too much to expect.—[*Aloud.*] Anything else?

Young C. Some miserable, pettifogging scoundrel!

Med. Good! ha! ha!

Young C. What do you mean by laughing at me?

Med. Ha! ha! ha! excellent! delicious!

Young C. Mr. —— are you ambitious of a kicking?

Med. Very, very—Go on—kick—go on.

Young C. [*Looking off.*] Here she comes! I'll speak to her.

Med. But, sir—sir——

Young C. Oh, go to the devil! [*Runs off,* L.

Med. There, there's a chance lost—gone! I have no hesitation in saying, that, in another minute, I should have been kicked; literally kicked—a legal luxury. Costs, damages, and actions rose up like sky-rockets in my aspiring soul, with golden tails reaching to the infinity of my hopes. [*Looking.*] They are coming this way; Mr. Hamilton in close conversation with Lady Courtly that is to be. Crim. Con.—Courtly, versus Hamilton—damages problematical

—Meddle, chief witness for plaintiff—guinea a-day—professional man! I'll take down their conversation verbatim.

[*Retires behind a bush*, R.

Enter Grace, *followed by* Young Courtly, L.

Grace. Perhaps you would follow your friend into the dining-room; refreshment, after your long journey, must be requisite.

Young C. Pardon me, madam! but the lovely garden and the loveliness before me, is better refreshment than I could procure in any dining-room.

Grace. Ha! Your company and compliments arrive together.

Young C. I trust that a passing remark will not spoil so welcome an introduction as this by offending you.

Grace. I am not certain that anything you could say would offend me.

Young C. I never meant——

Grace. I thought not. In turn, pardon me, when I request you will commence your visit with this piece of information:—I consider compliments impertinent, and sweetmeat language fulsome.

Young C. I would condemn my tongue to a Pythagorean silence, if I thought it could attempt to flatter.

Grace. It strikes me, sir, that you are a stray bee from the hive of fashion; if so, reserve your honey for its proper cell. A truce to compliments.—You have just arrived *from town*, I apprehend.

Young C. This moment I left mighty London, under the fever of a full season, groaning with the noisy pulse of wealth and the giddy whirling brain of fashion. Enchanting, busy London! how have I prevailed on myself to desert you! Next week the new ballet comes out—the week after comes Ascot. Oh!

Grace. How agonising must be the reflection!

Young C. Torture! Can you inform me how you manage to avoid suicide here? If there was but an opera, even, within twenty miles! We couldn't get up a rustic ballet among the village girls? No?—ah!

Grace. I am afraid you would find that difficult. How I contrive to support life I don't know—it is wonderful—

but I have not precisely contemplated suicide yet, nor do *I* miss the opera.

Young C. How can you manage to kill time?

Grace. I can't. Men talk of killing time, while time quietly kills them. I have many employments—this week I devote to study and various amusements—next week to being married—the following week to repentance, perhaps.

Young C. Married!

Grace. You seem surprised; I believe it is of frequent occurrence in the metropolis—is it not?

Young C. Might I ask to whom?

Grace. A gentleman who has been strongly recommended to me for the situation of husband.

Young C. What an extraordinary match! Would you not consider it advisable to see him, previous to incurring the consequences of such an act?

Grace. You must be aware that fashion says otherwise. The gentleman swears eternal devotion to the lady's fortune, and the lady swears she will outvie him still. My lord's horses and my lady's diamonds shine through a few seasons, until a seat in Parliament, or the continent stares them in the face; then, when thrown upon each other for resources of comfort, they begin to quarrel about the original conditions of the sale.

Young C. Sale! No! that would be degrading civilization into Turkish barbarity.

Grace. Worse, sir, a great deal worse; for there at least they do not attempt concealment of the barter; but here, every London ball-room is a marriage mart—young ladies are trotted out, while the mother, father, or chaperone plays auctioneer, and knocks them down to the highest bidder—young men are ticketed up with their fortunes on their backs,—and Love, turned into a dapper shopman, descants on the excellent qualities of the material.

Young C. Oh! that such a custom could have ever emanated from the healthy soil of an English heart!

Grace. No. It never did—like most of our literary dandyisms and dandy literature, it was borrowed from the French.

Young C. You seem to laugh at love.

Grace. Love! why, the very word is a breathing satire

upon man's reason—a mania, indigenous to humanity—nature's jester, who plays off tricks upon the world, and trips up common sense. When I'm in love, I'll write an almanac, for very lack of wit—prognosticate the sighing season—when to beware of tears—about this time, expect matrimony to be prevalent! Ha! ha! Why should I lay out my life in love's bonds upon the bare security of a man's word?

Enter James, L.

James. The Squire, Madam, has just arrived, and another gentleman with him.

Grace. [*Aside.*] My intended, I suppose. [*Exit James,* L.

Young C. I perceive you are one of the railers against what is termed the follies of high life.

Grace. No, not particularly; I deprecate all folly. By what prerogative can the west-end mint issue absurdity, which, if coined in the east, would be voted vulgar?

Young C. By a sovereign right—because it has Fashion's head upon its side, and that stamps it current.

Grace. Poor Fashion, for how many sins hast thou to answer! The gambler pawns his birth-right for fashion—the *roué* steals his friend's wife for fashion—each abandons himself to the storm of impulse, calling it the breeze of fashion.

Young C. Is this idol of the world so radically vicious?

Grace. No; the root is well enough, as the body was, until it had outgrown its native soil; but now, like a mighty giant lying over Europe, it pillows its head in Italy, its heart in France, leaving the heels alone its sole support for England.

Young C. Pardon me, madam, you wrong yourself to rail against your own inheritance—the kingdom to which loveliness and wit attest your title.

Grace. A mighty realm, forsooth,—with milliners for ministers, a cabinet of coxcombs, envy for my homage, ruin for my revenue—my right of rule depending on the shape of a bonnet or the set of a pelisse, with the next grand noodle as my heir-apparent. Mr. Hamilton, when I am crowned, I shall feel happy to abdicate in your favour.

[*Curtesys and exit,* L.

Young C. What did she mean by that? Hang me if I

can understand her—she is evidently not used to society. Ha!—takes every word I say for infallible truth—requires the solution of a compliment, as if it were a problem in Euclid. She said she was about to marry, but I rather imagine she was in jest. 'Pon my life, I feel very queer at the contemplation of such an idea—I'll follow her. [*Meddle comes down.*] Oh! perhaps this booby can inform me something about her. [*Meddle makes signs at him.*] What the devil is he at!

Med. It won't do—no—ah! um—it's not to be done.

Young C. What do you mean?

Med. [*Points after Grace.*] Counsel retained—cause to come off!

Young C. Cause to come off!

Med. Miss Grace is about to be married.

Young C. Is it possible?

Med. Certainly. If *I* have the drawing out of the deeds——

Young C. To whom?

Med. Ha! hem! Oh, yes! I dare say—Information being scarce in the market, I hope to make mine valuable.

Young C. Married! married!

Med. Now I shall have another chance.

Young C. I'll run and ascertain the truth of this from Dazzle. [*Exit*, L.

Med. It's of no use: he either dare not kick me, or he can't afford it—in either case, he is beneath my notice. Ah! who comes here?—can it be Sir Harcourt Courtly himself? It can be no other.

Enter COOL, L.

Sir, I have the honour to bid you welcome to Oak Hall and the village of Oldborough.

Cool. [*Aside.*] Excessively polite.—Sir, thank you.

Med. The township contains two thousand inhabitants.

Cool. Does it! I am delighted to hear it.

Med. [*Aside.*] I can charge him for that—ahem—six and eightpence is not much—but it is a beginning. [*Aloud.*] If you will permit me, I can inform you of the different commodities for which it is famous.

Cool. Much obliged—but here comes Sir Harcourt Court-

ly, my master, and Mr. Harkaway—any other time I shall feel delighted.

Med. Oh! [*Aside.*] Mistook the man for the master.

[*Retires up,* R.

Enter Max *and* Sir Harcourt, L.

Max. Here we are at last. Now give ye welcome to Oak Hall, Sir Harcourt, heartily!

Sir H. [*Languidly.*] Cool, assist me. [*Cool takes off his cloak and gloves; gives him white gloves and handkerchief.*

Max. Why, you require unpacking as carefully as my best bin of port. Well, now you are decanted, tell me what did you think of my park as we came along.

Sir H. That it would never come to an end. You said it was only a stone's throw from your infernal lodge to the house; why, it's ten miles, at least.

Max. I'll do it in ten minutes any day.

Sir H. Yes, in a steam carriage. Cool, perfume my handkerchief.

Max. Don't do it. Don't! perfume in the country! why, it's high treason in the very face of Nature; 'tis introducing the robbed to the robber. Here are the sweets from which your fulsome essences are pilfered, and libelled with their names;—don't insult them, too.

[*Meddle comes down,* C.

Sir H. [*To Meddle.*] Oh! cull me a bouquet, my man!

Max. [*Turning.*] Ah, Meddle! how are you? This is Lawyer Meddle.

Sir H. Oh! I took him for one of your people.

Med. Ah! naturally—um—Sir Harcourt Courtly, I have the honour to congratulate—happy occasion approaches. Ahem! I have no hesitation in saying this *very* happy occasion approaches.

Sir H. Cool, is the conversation addressed towards me?

Cool. I believe so, Sir Harcourt.

Med. Oh, certainly! I was complimenting you.

Sir H. Sir, you are very good; the honour is undeserved; but I am only in the habit of receiving compliments from the fair sex. Men's admiration is so damnably insipid.

Med. I had hoped to make a unit on that occasion.

Sir H. Yes, and you hoped to put an infernal number of cyphers after your unit on that and any other occasion.

Med. Ha! ha! very good. Why, I did hope to have the honour of drawing out the deeds; for, whatever Jenks may say to the contrary, I have no hesitation in saying—

Sir H. [*Putting him aside.—To Max.*] If the future Lady Courtly be visible at so unfashionable an hour as this, I shall beg to be introduced.

Max. Visible! Ever since six this morning, I'll warrant ye. Two to one she is at dinner.

Sir H. Dinner! Is it possible? Lady Courtly dine at half-past one P. M.!

Med. I rather prefer that hour to peck a little my——

Sir H. Dear me! who was addressing you?

Med. Oh! I beg pardon.

Max. Here, James! [*Calling.*

Enter JAMES, L.

Tell Miss Grace to come here directly. [*Exit James,* L.] Now prepare, Courtly, for, though I say it, she *is*—with the exception of my bay mare, Kitty—the handsomest thing in the country. Considering she is a biped, she is a wonder! Full of blood, sound wind and limb, plenty of bone, sweet coat, in fine condition, with a thorough-bred step, as dainty as a pet greyhound.

Sir H. Damme, don't compare her to a horse!

Max. Well, I wouldn't, but she's almost as fine a creature,—close similarities.

Med. Oh, very fine creature! Close similarity, amounting to identity.

Sir H. Good gracious, sir! What can a lawyer know about women!

Med. Everything. The consistorial court is a fine study of the character, and I have no hesitation in saying that I have examined more women than Jenks, or——

Sir H. Oh, damn Jenks!

Med. Sir, thank you. Damn him again, sir, damn him again!

Enter GRACE, L.

Grace. My dear uncle!

Max. Ah, Grace, you little jade, come here.

Sir H. [*Eyeing her through his glass.*] Oh, dear! she is a rural Venus! I'm astonished and delighted.

Max. Won't you kiss your old uncle? [*Kisses her.*

Sir H. [*Draws an agonizing face.*] Oh!—ah—um!—*N'importe!*—my privilege in embryo—hem! It's very tantalizing, though.

Max. You are not glad to see me, you are not.

Sir H. Oh; no, no! [*Aside,*] that is too much. I shall do something horrible presently, if this goes on. [*Aloud.*] I should be sorry to curtail any little ebullition of affection; but—ahem! May I be permitted?

Max. Of course you may. There, Grace, is Sir Harcourt, your husband that will be. Go to him, girl.

Sir H. Permit me to do homage to the charms, the presence of which have placed me in sight of Paradise.

[*Sir Harcourt and Grace retire.*

Enter Dazzle, L.

Daz. Ah! old fellow, how are you?

Max. I'm glad to see you. Are you comfortably quartered yet, eh?

Daz. Splendidly quartered! What a place you've got here! Here, Hamilton.

Enter Young Courtly.

Permit me to introduce my friend, Augustus Hamilton. Capital fellow! drinks like a sieve, and rides like a thunder-storm.

Max. Sir, I'm devilish glad to see you. Here, Sir Harcourt, permit me to introduce to you——

Young C. The devil!

Daz. [*Aside.*] What's the matter?

Young C. [*Aside.*] Why, that is my governor, by Jupiter!

Daz. [*Aside.*] What, old Whiskers! you don't say that?

Young C. [*Aside.*] It is: what's to be done now?

Max. Mr. Hamilton, Sir Harcourt Courtly—Sir Harcourt Courtly, Mr. Hamilton.

Sir H. Hamilton! Good gracious! God bless me! —why, Charles, is it possible?—why, Max, that's my son!

Young C. [*Aside.*] What shall I do!

Max. Your son!

Grace. Your son, Sir Harcourt! have you a son as old as that gentleman!

Sir H. No—that is—a yes,—not by twenty years—a—Charles, why don't you answer me, sir?

Young C. [*Aside to Dazzle.*] What shall I say?

Daz. [*Aside.*] Deny your identity.

Young C. [*Aside.*] Capital! [*Aloud.*] What's the matter sir?

Sir H. How came you down here, sir?

Young C. By one of Newman's best fours—in twelve hours and a quarter.

Sir H. Isn't your name Charles Courtly?

Young C. Not to my knowledge.

Sir H. Do you mean to say that you are usually called Augustus Hamilton?

Young C. Lamentable fact—and quite correct.

Sir H. Cool, is that my son?

Cool. No, sir—it is not Mr. Charles—but it is very like him.

Max. I cannot understand all this. [*Goes up.*

Grace. [*Aside.*] I think I can.

Daz. [*Aside to Young C.*] Give him a touch of the indignant.

Young C. Allow me to say, Sir What-d'ye-call'em Hartly—

Sir H. Hartly, sir! Courtly, sir! Courtly!

Young C. Well, Hartly, or Court-heart, or whatever your name may be, I say your conduct is—a—a—, and were it not for the presence of this lady, I should feel inclined—to—to—.

Sir H. No, no, that can't be my son,—he never would address me in that way.

Max. [*Coming down.*] What is all this?

Sir H. Sir, your likeness to my son Charles is so astonishing, that it, for a moment—the equilibrium of my etiquette—'pon my life, I—permit me to request your pardon.

Med. Sir Harcourt, don't apologise, don't—bring an action. I'm witness.

Sir H. Some one take this man away.

Enter JAMES, L.

James. Luncheon is on the table, sir.

Sir H. Miss Harkaway, I never swore before a lady in my life—except when I promised to love and cherish the late Lady Courtly, which I took care to preface with an apology,—I was compelled to the ceremony, and consequently not answerable for the language—but to that gentleman's identity I would have pledged—my hair.

Grace. [*Aside.*] If that security were called for, I suspect the answer would be—no effects.

[*Exeunt Sir Harcourt and Grace,* L.

Med. [*To Max.*] I have something very particular to communicate.

Max. Can't listen at present. [*Exit,* L.

Med. [*To Dazzle and Young C.*] I can afford you information, which I——

Daz. Oh, dont bother!

Young C. Go to the devil! } [*Exeunt,* L.

Med. Now, I have no hesitation in saying that is the height of ingratitude.—Oh—Mr. Cool—can you oblige me? [*Presents his account.*

Cool. Why, what is all this?

Med. Small account *versus* you—to giving information concerning the last census of the population of Oldborough and vicinity, six and eightpence.

Cool. Oh, you mean to make me pay for this, do you?

Med. Unconditionally.

Cool. Well, I have no objection—the charge is fair—but remember, I am a servant on board wages,—will you throw in a little advice gratis—if I give you the money?

Med. Ahem!—I will.

Cool. A fellow has insulted me. I want to abuse him—what terms are actionable?

Med. You may call him anything you please, providing there are no witnesses.

Cool. Oh, may I? [*Looks round.*] then you rascally, pettifogging scoundrel!

Med. Hallo!

Cool. You mean—dirty—disgrace to your profession.

Med. Libel—slander—

Cool. Ay, but where are your witnesses?

Med. Give me the costs—six and eightpence.

Cool. I deny that you gave me information at all.

Med. You do!

Cool. Yes, where are your witnesses? [*Exit*, L.
Med. Ah—damme! [*Exit*, L.

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

Scene I.—*A Morning-Room in Oak Hall, French windows opening to the Lawn.* Max *and* Sir Harcourt *seated on one side,* Dazzle *on the other;* Grace *and* Young Courtly *playing chess at back All dressed for dinner.*

Max. [*Aside to Sir H.*] What can I do?
Sir H. Get rid of them civilly.
Max. What, turn them out, after I particularly invited them to stay a month or two?
Sir H. Why, they are disreputable characters; as for that young fellow, in whom my Lady Courtly appears so particularly absorbed,—I am bewildered—I have written to town for my Charles, my boy—it certainly is the most extraordinary likeness—
Daz. Sir Harcourt, I have an idea—
Sir H. Sir, I am delighted to hear it.—[*Aside to Max.*] That fellow is a swindler.
Max. I met him at your house.
Sir H. Never saw him before in all my life.
Daz. [*Crossing to Sir H.*] I will bet you five to one that I can beat you three out of four games at billiards, with one hand.
Sir H. No, sir.
Daz. I don't mind giving you ten points in fifty.
Sir H. Sir, I never gamble.
Daz. You don't! Well, I'll teach you—easiest thing in life—you have every requisite—good temper.
Sir H. I have not, sir.
Daz. A long-headed, knowing old buck.
Sir H. Sir! [*They go up conversing with Max*, c.
Grace. Really, Mr. Hamilton, you improve.—A young man pays us a visit, as you half intimate, to escape inconvenient friends—that is complimentary to us, his hosts.

Young C. Nay, that is too severe.

Grace. After an acquaintanceship of two days, you sit down to teach me chess and domestic economy at the same time.—Might I ask where you graduated in that science—where you learned all that store of matrimonial advice which you have obliged me with? [*They come forward.*

Young C. I imbibed it, madam, from the moment I beheld you, and having studied my subject *con amore*, took my degrees from your eyes.

Grace. Oh, I see you are a Master of Arts already.

Young C. Unfortunately, no—I shall remain a bachelor—till you can assist me to that honour. [*Sir Harcourt comes down—aside to Dazzle.*] Keep the old boy away.

Daz. [*Aside.*] How do you get on?

Young C. [*Aside.*] Splendidly!

Sir H. Is the conversation strictly confidential?—or might I join?

Daz. [*Taking his arm.*] Oh, not in the least, my dear sir—we were remarking that rifle shooting was an excellent diversion during the summer months.

Sir H. [*Drawing himself up.*] Sir, I was addressing—

Daz. And I was saying what a pity it was I couldn't find any one reasonable enough to back his opinion with long odds—come out on the lawn, and pitch up your hat, and I will hold you ten to one I put a bullet into it every time, at forty paces.

Sir H. No, sir—I consider you——

Max. Here, all of you—look, here is Lady Gay Spanker coming across the lawn at a hand gallop!

Sir H. [*Running to the window.*] Bless me, the horse is running away!

Max. Look how she takes that fence! there's a seat.

Sir H. Lady Gay Spanker—who may she be?

Grace. Gay Spanker, Sir Harcourt? My cousin and dearest friend—you *must* like her.

Sir H. It will be my devoir, since it is your wish—though it will be a hard task in your presence.

Grace. I am sure she will like you.

Sir H. Ha! ha! I flatter myself.

Young C. Who, and what is she?

Grace. Glee, glee, made a living thing—Nature, in some frolic mood, shut up a merry devil in her eye, and, spiting

Art, stole joy's brightest harmony to thrill her laugh, which peals out sorrow's knell. Her cry rings loudest in the field —the very echo loves it best, and as each hill attempts to ape her voice, Earth seems to laugh that it made a thing so glad.

Max. Ay, the merriest minx I ever kissed.

[*Lady Gay laughs without.*

Lady G. [*Without.*] Max!

Max. Come in, you mischievous puss.

Enter James, L.

James. Mr. Adolphus and Lady Gay Spanker. [*Exit.*

Enter Lady Gay, L., *fully equipped in riding habit, &c.*

Lady Gay. Ha! ha! Well, governor, how are ye? I have been down five times, climbing up your stairs in my long clothes. How are you, Grace, dear? [*Kisses her.*] There, don't fidget, Max. And there—[*kisses him*] there's one for you.

Sir H. Ahem!

Lady Gay. Oh, gracious, I didn't see you had visitors.

Max. Permit me to introduce—Sir Harcourt Courtly, Lady Gay Spanker. Mr. Dazzle, Mr. Hamilton—Lady Gay Spanker.

Sir H. [*Aside.*] A devilish fine woman!

Daz. [*Aside to Sir H.*] She's a devilish fine woman.

Lady Gay. You musn't think anything of the liberties I take with my old papa here—bless him!

Sir H. Oh, no! [*Aside.*] I only thought I should like to be in his place.

Lady Gay. I am so glad you have come, Sir Harcourt. Now we shall be able to make a decent figure at the heels of a hunt.

Sir H. Does your Ladyship hunt?

Lady Gay. Ha! I say, Governor, does my Ladyship hunt? I rather flatter myself that I do hunt! Why, Sir Harcourt, one might as well live without laughing as without hunting. Man was fashioned expressly to fit a horse. Are not hedges and ditches created for leaps? Of course! And I look upon foxes to be one of the most blessed dispensations of a benign Providence.

Sir H. Yes, it is all very well in the abstract: I tried it once.

Lady Gay. Once! Only once?

Sir H. Once, only once. And then the animal ran away with me.

Lady Gay. Why, you would not have him walk?

Sir H. Finding my society disagreeable, he instituted a series of kicks, with a view to removing the annoyance; but aided by the united stays of the mane and tail, I frustrated his intentions. [*All laugh.*] His next resource, however, was more effectual, for he succeeded in rubbing me off against a tree.

Max & Lady Gay. Ha! ha! ha!

Daz. How absurd you must have looked with your legs and arms in the air, like a shipwrecked tea-table.

Sir H. Sir, I never looked absurd in my life. Ah, it may be very amusing in relation, I dare say, but very unpleasant in effect.

Lady Gay. I pity you, Sir Harcourt; it was criminal in your parents to neglect your education so shamefully.

Sir H. Possibly; but be assured, I shall never break my neck awkwardly from a horse, when it might be accomplished with less trouble from a bed-room window.

Young C. [*Aside.*] My dad will be caught by this she-Bucephalus-tamer.

Max. Ah! Sir Harcourt, had you been here a month ago, you would have witnessed the most glorious run that ever swept over merry England's green cheek—a steeple-chase, sir, which I intended to win, but my horse broke down the day before. I had a chance, notwithstanding, and but for Gay here, I should have won. How I regretted my absence from it! How did my filly behave herself, Gay?

Lady Gay. Gloriously, Max! gloriously! There were sixty horses in the field, all mettle to the bone: the start was a picture—away we went in a cloud—pell-mell—helter-skelter—the fools first, as usual, using themselves up—we soon passed them—first your Kitty, then my Blueskin, and Craven's colt last. Then came the tug—Kitty skimmed the walls—Blueskin flew over the fences—the Colt neck-and-neck, and half a mile to run—at last the Colt baulked a leap and went wild. Kitty and I had it all

to ourselves—she was three lengths ahead as we breasted the last wall, six feet, if an inch, and a ditch on the other side. Now, for the first time, I gave Blueskin his head—ha! ha! Away he flew like a thunderbolt—over went the filly—I over the same spot, leaving Kitty in the ditch—walked the steeple, eight miles in thirty minutes, and scarcely turned a hair.

All. Bravo! Bravo!

Lady Gay. Do you hunt?

Daz. Hunt! I belong to a hunting family. I was born on horseback and cradled in a kennel! Ay, and I hope I may die with a whoo-whoop!

Max. [*To Sir H.*] You must leave your town habits in the smoke of London: here we rise with the lark.

Sir H. Haven't the remotest conception when that period is.

Grace. The man that misses sunrise loses the sweetest part of his existence.

Sir H. Oh, pardon me; I have seen sunrise frequently after a ball, or from the windows of my travelling carriage, and I always considered it disagreeable.

Grace. I love to watch the first tear that glistens in the opening eye of morning, the silent song the flowers breathe, the thrilling choir of the woodland minstrels, to which the modest brook trickles aplause:—these swelling out the sweetest chord of sweet creation's matins, seem to pour some soft and merry tale into the daylight's ear, as if the waking world had dreamed a happy thing, and now smiled o'er the telling of it.

Sir H. The effect of a rustic education! Who could ever discover music in a damp foggy morning, except those confounded waits, who never play in tune, and a miserable wretch who makes a point of crying coffee under my window just as I am persuading myself to sleep: in fact, I never heard any music worth listening to, except in Italy.

Lady Gay. No? then you never heard a well-trained English pack in full cry?

Sir H. Full cry!

Lady G. Ay! there is harmony, if you will. Give me the trumpet-neigh; the spotted pack just catching scent. What a chorus is their yelp! The view-hallo, blent with a peal of free and fearless mirth! That's our old English music,—match it where you can.

Sir H. [*Aside.*] I must see about Lady Gay Spanker.

Daz. [*Aside to Sir H.*] Ah, would you——

Lady Gay. Time then appears as young as love, and plumes as swift a wing. Away we go! The earth flies back to aid our course! Horse, man, hound, earth, heaven!—all—all—one piece of glowing ecstacy! Then I love the world, myself, and every living thing,—my jocund soul cries out for very glee, as it could wish that all creation had but one mouth, that I might kiss it!

Sir H. [*Aside.*] I wish I were the mouth!

Max. Why, we will regenerate you, Baronet! But, Gay, where is your husband?—Where is Adolphus!

Lady Gay. Bless me, where is my Dolly?

Sir H. You are married, then?

Lady Gay. I have a husband somewhere, though I can't find him just now. Dolly, dear! [*Aside to Max.*] Governor, at home I always whistle when I want him.

Enter Spanker, L.

Span. Here I am,—did you call me, Gay?

Sir H. [*Eyeing him.*] Is that your husband?

Lady Gay. [*Aside.*] Yes, bless his stupid face, that's my Dolly.

Max. Permit me to introduce you to Sir Harcourt Courtly.

Span. How d'ye do? I—ah!—um!

[*Appears frightened.*

Lady Gay. Delighted to have the honour of making the acquaintance of a gentleman so highly celebrated in the world of fashion.

Span. Oh, yes, delighted, I'm sure—quite—very, so delighted—delighted!

[*Gets quite confused, draws on his glove, and tears it.*

Lady Gay. Where have you been, Dolly?

Span. Oh, ah, I was just outside.

Max. Why did you not come in?

Span. I'm sure I didn't—I don't exactly know, but I thought as—perhaps—I can't remember.

Daz. Shall we have the pleasure of your company to dinner?

Span. I always dine—usually—that is, unless Gay remains——

Lady Gay. Stay dinner, of course; we came on purpose to stop three or four days with you.

Grace. Will you excuse my absence, Gay?

Max. What! what! Where are you going? What takes you away!

Grace. We must postpone the dinner till Gay is dressed

Max. Oh, never mind,—stay where you are.

Grace. No, I must go.

Max. I say you sha'n't! I will be king in my own house.

Grace. Do, my dear uncle;—you shall be king, and I'll be your prime minister,—that is, I'll rule, and you shall have the honor of taking the consequences. [*Exit*, L.

Lady Gay. Well said, Grace; have your own way; it is the only thing we women ought to be allowed.

Max. Come, Gay, dress for dinner.

Sir H. Permit me, Lady Gay Spanker.

Lady Gay. With pleasure,—what do you want?

Sir H. To escort you.

Lady Gay. Oh, never mind, I can escort myself, thank you, and Dolly too;—come, dear! [*Exit*, R.

Sir H. Au revoir!

Span. Ah, thank you! [*Exit awkwardly*, R.

Sir H. What an ill-assorted pair!

Max. Not a bit! She married him for freedom, and she has it; he married her for protection, and he has it.

Sir H. How he ever summoned courage to propose to her, I can't guess.

Max. Bless you, he never did. She proposed to him! She says he would if he could; but as he couldn't, she did it for him. [*Exeunt laughing*, L.

Enter COOL *with a letter*, L.

Cool. Mr. Charles, I have been watching to find you alone. Sir Harcourt has written to town for you.

Young C. The devil he has!

Cool. He expects you down to-morrow evening.

Daz. Oh! he'll be punctual. A thought strikes me.

Young C. Pooh! Confound your thoughts! I can think of nothing but the idea of leaving Grace, at the very moment when I had established the most——

Daz. What if I can prevent her marriage with your Governor?

Young C. Impossible!

Daz. He's pluming himself for the conquest of Lady Gay Spanker. It will not be difficult to make him believe she accedes to his suit. And if she would but join in the plan——

Young C. I see it all. And do you think she would?

Daz. I mistake my game if she would not.

Cool. Here comes Sir Harcourt!

Daz. I'll begin with him. Retire, and watch how I'll open the campaign for you.

[*Young Courtly and Cool retire.*

Enter Sir Harcourt, L.

Sir H. Here is that cursed fellow again.

Daz. Ah, my dear old friend!

Sir H. Mr. Dazzle!

Daz. I have a secret of importance to disclose to you. Are you a man of honor? Hush! don't speak; you are. It is with the greatest pain I am compelled to request you, as a gentleman, that you will shun studiously the society of Lady Gay Spanker!

Sir H. Good gracious! Wherefore, and by what right do you make such a demand?

Daz. Why, I am distantly related to the Spankers.

Sir H. Why, damme, sir, if you don't appear to be related to every family in Great Britain!

Daz. A good many of the nobility claim me as a connection. But, to return—she is much struck with your address; evidently, she laid herself out for display——

Sir H. Ha! you surprise me!

Daz. To entangle you.

Sir H. Ha! ha! why, it did appear like it.

Daz. You will spare her for my sake; give her no encouragement; if disgrace come upon my relatives, the Spankers, I should never hold up my head again.

Sir H. [*Aside.*] I shall achieve an easy conquest, and a glorious. Ha! ha! I never remarked it before, but this is a gentleman.

Daz. May I rely on your generosity?

Sir H. Faithfully. [*Shakes his hand.*] Sir, I honour and esteem you; but, might I ask, how came you to meet our friend, Max Harkaway, in my house in Belgrave Square?

Re-enter YOUNG COURTLY. *Sits on sofa at back*, L.

Daz. Certainly. I had an acceptance of your son's for one hundred pounds.

Sir H. [*Astonished.*] Of my son's? Impossible!

Daz. Ah, sir, fact! he paid a debt for a poor unfortunate man—fifteen children—half-a-dozen wives—the devil knows what all.

Sir H. Simple boy!

Daz. Innocent youth, I have no doubt; when you have the hundred convenient, I shall feel delighted.

Sir H. Oh! follow me to my room, and if you have the document, it will be happiness to me to pay it. Poor Charles! good heart!

Daz. Oh, a splendid heart! I dare say. [*Exit Sir Harcourt*, L.] Come, here; write me the bill.

Young C. What for?

Daz. What for? why, to release the unfortunate man and his family, to be sure, from jail.

Young C. Who is he?

Daz. Yourself.

Young C. But I haven't fifteen children!

Daz. Will you take your oath of that?

Young C. Nor four wives.

Daz. More shame for you, with all that family. Come, don't be obstinate; write and date it back.

Young C. Ay, but where is the stamp?

Daz. Here they are, of all patterns. [*Pulls out a pocket-book.*] I keep them ready drawn in case of necessity, all but the date and acceptance. Now, if you are in an autographic humour, you can try how your signature will look across half-a-dozen of them;—there—write—exactly—you know the place—across—good—and thank your lucky stars that you have found a friend at last, that gives you money and advice. [*Takes paper and exit*, L.

Young C. Things are approaching to a climax; I must appear in *propria persona*—and immediately—but I must first ascertain what are the real sentiments of this riddle of a woman. Does she love me? I flatter myself—by Jove, here she comes—I shall never have such an opportunity again!

Enter Grace, L.

Grace. I wish I had never seen Mr. Hamilton. Why does every object appear robbed of the charm it once presented to me? Why do I shudder at the contemplation of this marriage, which, till now, was to me a subject of indifference? Am I in love? In love! if I am, my past life has been the work of raising up a pedestal to place my own folly on—I—the infidel—the railer!

Young C. Meditating upon matrimony, madam?

Grace. [*Aside.*] He little thinks he was the subject of my meditations! [*Aloud.*] No.

Young C. [*Aside.*] I must unmask my battery now.

Grace. [*Aside.*] How foolish I am—he will perceive that I tremble—I must appear at ease. [*A pause.*

Young C. Eh? ah! um!

Grace. Ah! [*They sink into silence again. Aside.*] How very awkward!

Young C. [*Aside.*] It is a very difficult subject to begin [*Aloud.*] Madam—ahem—there was—is—I mean—I was about to remark—a—[*Aside.*] Hang me if it is not a very slippery subject. I must brush up my faculties; attack her in her own way. [*Aloud.*] Sing! oh, muse! [*Aside.*] Why, I have made love before to a hundred women!

Grace. [*Aside.*] I wish I had something to do, for I have nothing to say.

Young C. Madam—there is—a subject so fraught with fate to my future life, that you must pardon my lack of delicacy should a too hasty expression mar the fervent courtesy of its intent. To you, I feel aware, I must appear in the light of a comparative stranger.

Grace. [*Aside.*] I know what's coming.

Young C. Of you—I know perhaps too much for my own peace.

Grace. [*Aside.*] He *is* in love.

Young C. I forget all that befel before I saw your beauteous self; I seem born into another world—my nature changed—the beams of that bright face falling on my soul, have, from its chaos, warmed into life the flowrets of affection, whose maiden odours now float toward the sun, pouring forth on their pure tongue a mite of adoration, midst

the voices of a universe. [*Aside.*] That's something in her own style.

Grace. Mr. Hamilton!

Young C. You cannot feel surprised——

Grace. I am more than surprised. [*Aside.*] I am delighted.

Young C. Do not speak so coldly.

Grace. You have offended me.

Young C. No, madam; no woman, whatever her state, can be offended by the adoration even of the meanest; it is myself whom I have offended and deceived—but still I ask your pardon.

Grace. [*Aside.*] Oh! he thinks I am refusing him. [*Aloud.*] I am not exactly offended, but——

Young C. Consider my position—a few days—and an insurmountable barrier would have placed you beyond my wildest hopes—you would have been my mother.

Grace. I should have been your mother! [*Aside.*] I thought so.

Young C. No—that is, I meant Sir Harcourt Courtly's bride.

Grace. [*With great emphasis.*] Never!

Young C. How! never! may I then hope?—you turn away—you would not lacerate me by a refusal?

Grace. [*Aside.*] How stupid he is!

Young C. Still silent! I thank you, Miss Grace—I ought to have expected this—fool that I have been—one course alone remains—farewell!

Grace. [*Aside.*] Now he's going.

Young C. Farewell forever! [*Sits.*] Will you not speak one word? I shall leave this house immediately—I shall not see you again.

Grace. Unhand me, sir, I insist.

Young C. [*Aside.*] Oh! what an ass I've been! [*Rushes up to her and seizes her hand.*] Release this hand? Never! never! [*Kissing it.*] Never will I quit this hand! it shall be my companion in misery—in solitude—when you are far away.

Grace. Oh! should any one come! [*Drops her handkerchief; he stoops to pick it up.*] For heaven's sake do not kneel.

Young C. [*Kneels.*] Forever thus prostrate, before my

soul's saint, I will lead a pious life of eternal adoration.

Grace. Should we be discovered thus—pray, Mr. Hamilton—pray—pray.

Young C. Pray! I am praying; what more can I do?

Grace. Your conduct is shameful.

Young C. It is. [*Rises.*

Grace. And if I do not scream, it is not for your sake—that—but it might alarm the family.

Young C. It might—it would. Say, am I wholly indifferent to you? I entreat one word—I implore you—do not withdraw your hand—[*She snatches it away—he puts his around her waist.*] You smile.

Grace. Leave me, dear Mr. Hamilton!

Young C. Dear! Then I am dear to you; that word once more; say—say you love me!

Grace. Is this fair?

[*He catches her in his arms and kisses her.*

Enter Lady Gay Spanker, r.

Lady Gay. Ha! oh!

Grace. Gay! destruction! [*Exit,* l.

Young C. Fizgig! The devil!

Lady Gay. Don't mind me—pray, don't let me be any interruption!

Young C. I was just——

Lady Gay. Yes, I see you were.

Young C. Oh! madam, how could you mar my bliss in the very ecstacy of its fulfilment?

Lady Gay. I always like to be in at the death. Never drop your ears; bless you, she is only a little fresh—give her her head, and she will outrun herself.

Young C. Possibly; but what am I to do?

Lady Gay. Keep your seat.

Young C. But in a few days she will take a leap that must throw me—she marries Sir Harcourt Courtly.

Lady Gay. Why, that is awkward, certainly; but you can challenge him, and shoot him.

Young C. Unfortunately, that is out of the question.

Lady Gay. How so?

Young C. You will not betray a secret, if I inform you?

Lady Gay. All right—what is it?

Young C. I am his son.

Lady Gay. What—his son? But he does not know you?

Young C. No. I met him here by chance, and faced it out, I never saw him before in my life.

Lady Gay. Beautiful!—I see it all—you're in love with your mother, that should be—your wife, that will be.

Young C. Now, I think I could distance the old gentleman, if you will but lend us your assistance.

Lady Gay. I will in anything.

Young C. You must know, then, that my father, Sir Harcourt, has fallen desperately in love with you.

Lady Gay. With me!—[*Utters a scream of delight.*]—That is delicious!

Young C. Now, if you only could——

Lady Gay. Could!—I will. Ha! ha! I see my cue. I'll cross his scent—I'll draw him after me. Ho! ho! won't I make love to him? Ha!

Young C. The only objection might be Mr. Spanker, who might——

Lady Gay. No, he mightn't, he 'as no objection. Bless him, he's an inestimable little character—you don't know him as well as I do. I dare say—ha! ha! [*Dinner-bell rings.*] Here they come to dinner. I'll commence my operations on your governor immediately. Ha! ha! how I shall enjoy it.

Young C. Be guarded!

Enter MAX HARKAWAY, SIR HARCOURT, DAZZLE, GRACE, *and* SPANKER, L.

Max. Now, gentlemen—Sir Harcourt, do you lead Grace.

Lady Gay. I believe Sir Harcourt is engaged to me.
[*Takes his arm.*

Max. Well, please yourselves.

[*They file out, Max first, Young Courtly and Grace, Sir Harcourt coquetting with Lady Gay, leaving Dazzle, who offers his arm to Spanker.*

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A handsome Drawing-Room in Oak Hall, chandeliers, tables with books, drawings, &c.* GRACE *and* LADY GAY *discovered. Servant handing Coffee.*

Grace. If there be one habit more abominable than another, it is that of the gentlemen sitting over their wine: it is a selfish, unfeeling fashion, and a gross insult to our sex.

Lady Gay. We are turned out just when the fun begins. How happy the poor wretches look at the contemplation of being rid of us.

Grace. The conventional signal for the ladies to withdraw, is anxiously and deliberately waited for.

Lady Gay. Then I begin to wish I were a man.

Grace. The instant the door is closed upon us, there rises a roar!

Lady Gay. In celebration of their short-lived liberty, my love; rejoicing over their emancipation.

Grace. I think it very insulting, whatever it may be.

Lady Gay. Ah! my dear, philosophers say that man is the creature of an hour—it is the dinner hour, I suppose.

[*Loud noise. Cries of* 'A song, a song.'

Grace. I am afraid they are getting too pleasant to be agreeable.

Lady Gay. I hope the squire will restrict himself; after his third bottle, he becomes rather voluminous. [*Cries of* 'Silence.'] Some one is going to sing. [*Jumps up.*] Let us hear! [*Spanker is heard to sing.*

Grace. Oh, no, Gay, for heaven's sake!

Lady Gay. Oho! ha! ha! why, that is my Dolly. [*At the conclusion of the verse.*] Well, I never heard my Dolly sing before! Happy wretches, how I envy them!

Enter JAMES, L., *with a note.*

James. Mr. Hamilton has just left the house for London.

Grace. Impossible!—that is, without seeing—that is—

Lady Gay. Ha! ha!

Grace. He never—speak, sir!

James. He left, Miss Grace, in a desperate hurry, and

this note, I believe, for you. [*Presenting a note on a salver.*

Grace. For me! [*About to snatch it, but restraining herself, takes it coolly. Exit James.*

[*Reads.*] 'Your manner during dinner has left me no alternative but instant departure; my absence will release you from the oppression which my society must necessarily inflict on your sensitive mind. It may tend also to smother, though it can never extinguish, that indomitable passion, of which I am the passive victim. Dare I supplicate pardon and oblivion for the past? It is the last request of the self-deceived, but still loving

'AUGUSTUS HAMILTON.'

[*Puts her hand to her forehead and appears giddy.*

Lady Gay. Hallo, Grace! what's the matter?

Grace. [*Recovering herself.*] Nothing—the heat of the room.

Lady Gay. Oh! what excuse does he make? particular unforeseen business, I suppose?

Grace. Why, yes—a mere formula—a—a—you may put it in the fire. [*Puts it in her bosom.*

Lady Gay. [*Aside.*] It is near enough to the fire where it is.

Grace. I'm glad he's gone.

Lady Gay. So am I.

Grace. He was a disagreeable, ignorant person.

Lady Gay. Yes; and so vulgar!

Grace. No, he was not at all vulgar.

Lady Gay. I mean in appearance.

Grace. Oh! how can you say so; he was very *distingué*.

Lady Gay. Well, I might have been mistaken, but I took him for a forward, intrusive——

Grace. Good gracious, Gay! he was very retiring—even shy.

Lady Gay. [*Aside.*] It's all right. *She* is in love,—blows hot and cold in the same breath.

Grace. How can you be a competent judge? Why, you have not known him more than a few hours,—while I —I——

Lady Gay. Have known him two days and a quarter! I yield—I confess, I never was, or will be so intimate with him as you appeared to be! Ha! ha! [*Loud noise of argument. The folding-doors are thrown open.*

Enter the whole party of gentlemen, apparently engaged in

warm discussion. They assemble in knots, while the Servants hand Coffee, &c. MAX, SIR HARCOURT, DAZZLE, *and* SPANKER, *together.*

Daz. But, my dear sir, consider the position of the two countries, under such a constitution.

Sir H. The two countries! What have they to do with the subject.

Max. Everything. Look at their two legislative bodies.

Span. Ay, look at their two legislative bodies.

Sir H. Why, it would inevitably establish universal anarchy and confusion.

Grace. I think they are pretty well established already.

Span. Well, suppose it did, what has anarchy and confusion to do with the subject?

Lady Gay. Do look at my Dolly: he is arguing—talking politics—'pon my life he is. [*Calling.*] Mr. Spanker, my dear!

Span. Excuse me, love, I am discussing a point of importance.

Lady Gay. Oh, that is delicious; he must discuss that to me.—[*She goes up and leads him down, he appears to have shaken off his gaucherie, she shakes her head.*] Dolly! Dolly!

Span. Pardon me, Lady Gay Spanker, I conceive your mutilation of my sponsorial appellation derogatory to my *amour propre.*

Lady Gay. Your what? Ho! ho!

Span. And I particularly request that, for the future, I may not be treated with that cavalier spirit which does not become your sex nor your station, your ladyship.

Lady Gay. You have been indulging till you have lost the little wit nature dribbled into your unfortunate little head—your brains want the whipper-in—you are not yourself.

Span. Madam, I am doubly myself; and permit me to inform you, that unless you voluntarily pay obedience to my commands, I shall enforce them.

Lady Gay. Your commands!

Span. Yes, madam; I mean to put a full stop to your hunting.

Lady Gay. You do! ah! [*Aside.*] I can scarcely speak

from delight. [*Aloud.*] Who put such an idea into your head, for I am sure it is not an original emanation of your genius?

Span. Sir Harcourt Courtly, my friend; and now, mark me! I request, for your own sake, that I may not be compelled to assert my a—my authority, as your husband. I shall say no more than this—if you persist in your absurd rebellion——

Lady Gay. Well!

Span. Contemplate a separation.

[*Looks at her haughtily and retires.*

Lady Gay. Now I'm happy! My own little darling, inestimable Dolly, has tumbled into a spirit, somehow. Sir Harcourt, too! Ha! ha! he's trying to make him ill-treat me, so that his own suit may thrive.

Sir H. [*Advances.*] Lady Gay!

Lady Gay. Now for it.

Sir H. What hours of misery were those I passed, when, by your secession, the room suffered a total eclipse.

Lady Gay. Ah! you flatter.

Sir H. No, pardon me, that were impossible. No, believe me, I tried to join in the boisterous mirth, but my thoughts would desert to the drawing-room. Ah! how I envied the careless levity and cool indifference with which Mr. Spanker enjoyed your absence.

Daz. [*Who is lounging in a chair.*] Max, that Madeira is worth its weight in gold; I hope you have more of it.

Max. A pipe, I think.

Daz. I consider a magnum of that nectar, and a meerschaum of kanaster, to consummate the ultimatum of all mundane bliss. To drown myself in liquid ecstacy, and then blow a cloud on which the enfranchised soul could soar above Olympus.—Oh!

Enter James, L.

James. Mr. Charles Courtly!

Sir H. Ah, now, Max, you must see a living apology for my conduct.

Enter Young Courtly, *dressed very plainly.*

Well, Charles, how are you? Don't be afraid. There, Max, what do you say now?

Max. Well, this is the most extraordinary likeness.

Grace. [*Aside.*] Yes—considering it is the original. I am not so easily deceived!

Max. Sir, I am delighted to see you.

Young C. Thank you, sir.

Daz. Will you be kind enough to introduce me, Sir Harcourt?

Sir H. This is Mr. Dazzle, Charles.

Young C. Which? [*Looking from Spanker to Dazzle.*

Sir H. [*To Lady Gay.*] Is not that refreshing? Miss Harkaway—Charles, this is your mother, or rather will be.

Young C. Madam, I shall love, honour, and obey you punctually. [*Takes out a book, sighs, and goes up reading.*

Enter James, L.

Sir H. You perceive? Quite unused to society—perfectly ignorant of every conventional rule of life.

James. The Doctor and the young ladies have arrived.

[*Exit*, L.

Max. The young ladies—now we must to the ball—I make it a rule always to commence the festivities with a good old country dance—a rattling Sir Roger de Coverly; come, Sir Harcourt.

Sir H. Does this antiquity require a war-whoop in it?

Max. Nothing but a nimble foot and a light heart.

Sir H. Very antediluvian indispensables! Lady Gay Spanker, will you honour me by becoming my preceptor?

Lady Gay. Why, I am engaged—but [*Aloud*] on such a plea as Sir Harcourt's, I must waive all obstacles.

Max. Now, Grace, girl—give your hand to Mr. Courtly.

Grace. Pray, excuse me, uncle—I have a headache.

Sir H. [*Aside.*] Jealousy! by the gods.—Jealous of my devotions at another's fane! [*Aloud.*] Charles, my boy! amuse Miss Grace during our absence.

[*Exit with Lady Gay*, L.

Max. But don't you dance, Mr. Courtly!

Young C. Dance, sir!—I never dance—I can procure exercise in a much more rational manner—and music disturbs my meditations.

Max. Well, do the gallant. [*Exit*, L.

Young C. I never studied that Art—but I have a Prize Essay on a Hydrostatic subject, which would delight her

—for it enchanted the Reverend Doctor Pump, of Corpus Christi.

Grace. [*Aside.*] What on earth could have induced him to disguise himself in that frightful way!—I rather suspect some plot to entrap me into a confession.

Young C. [*Aside.*] Dare I confess this trick to her? No! Not until I have proved her affection indisputably. Let me see—I must concoct. [*Takes a chair, and forgetting his assumed character, is about to take his natural free manner.—Grace looks surprised.—He turn abashed.*] Madam, I have been desired to amuse you.

Grace. Thank you.

Young C. 'The labour we delight in, physics pain.'—I will draw you a moral, ahem! Subject, the effects of inebriety!—which, according to Ben Jonson—means perplexion of the intellects, caused by imbibing spirituous liquors.—About an hour before my arrival, I passed an appalling evidence of the effects of this state—a carriage was overthrown—horses killed—gentleman in a hopeless state, with his neck broken—all occasioned by the intoxication of the post-boy.

Grace. That is very amusing.

Young C. I found it edifying—nutritious food for reflection—the expiring man desired his best compliments to you.

Grace. To me?

Young C. Yes.

Grace. His name was—

Young C. Mr. Augustus Hamilton.

Grace. Augustus! Oh! [*Affects to faint.*]

Young C. [*Aside.*] Huzza!

Grace. But where, sir, did this happen?

Young C. About four miles down the road.

Grace. He must be conveyed here.

Enter Servant, L.

Serv. Mr. Meddle, madam. [*Exit,* L.

Enter Meddle, L.

Med. On very particular business.

Grace. The very person. My dear sir!

Med. My dear madam!

Grace. You must execute a very particular commission for me immediately. Mr. Hamilton has met with a frightful accident on the London road, and is in a dying state.

Med. Well! I have no hesitation in saying, he takes it uncommonly easy—he looks as if he was used to it.

Grace. You mistake: that is not Mr. Hamilton, but Mr. Courtly, who will explain everything, and conduct you to the spot.

Young C. [*Aside.*] Oh! I must put a stop to all this, or I shall be found out.—[*Aloud.*] Madam, that were useless, for I omitted to mention a small fact which occurred before I left Mr. Hamilton—he died.

Grace. Dear me! Oh, then we needn't trouble you, Mr. Meddle. [*Music heard.*] Hark! I hear they are commencing a waltz—if you will ask me—perhaps your society and conversation may tend to dispel the dreadful sensations you have aroused.

Young C. [*Aside.*] Hears of my death—screams out—and then asks me to waltz! I am bewildered! Can she suspect me? I wonder which she likes best—me or my double? Confound this disguise—I must retain it—I have gone too far with my dad to pull up now.—At your service, madam.

Grace. [*Aside.*] I will pay him well for this trick!

[*Exeunt,* L., *all but Meddle.*

Med. Well, if that is not Mr. Hamilton, scratch me out with a big blade, for I am a blot—a mistake upon the rolls. There is an error in the pleadings somewhere, and I will discover it. I would swear to his identity before the most discriminating jury. By the bye, this accident will form a capital excuse for my presence here. I just stepped in to see how matters worked, and—stay—here comes the bridegroom elect—and, oh! in his very arms, Lady Gay Spanker! [*Looks round.*] Where are my witnesses? Oh, that some one else were here! However, I can retire and get some information, eh—Spanker versus Courtly—damages—witness. [*Gets into an arm-chair, which he turns round.*

Enter Sir Harcourt Courtly, *supporting* Lady Gay, L.

Sir H. This cool room will recover you.

Lady Gay. Excuse my trusting to you for support.

Sir H. I am transported! Allow me thus ever to sup-

port this lovely burden, and I shall conceive that Paradise is regained. [*They sit.*]

Lady Gay. Oh! Sir Harcourt, I feel very faint.

Sir H. The waltz made you giddy.

Lady Gay. And I have left my salts in the other room.

Sir H. I always carry a flacon, for the express accommodation of the fair sex. [*Producing a smelling-bottle.*]

Lady Gay. Thank you—ah! [*She sighs.*]

Sir H. What a sigh was there!

Lady Gay. The vapour of consuming grief.

Sir H. Grief? Is it possible! Have you a grief? Are you unhappy? Dear me!

Lady Gay. Am I not married?

Sir H. What a horrible state of existence!

Lady Gay. I am never contradicted, so there are none of those enlivening, interesting little differences, which so pleasingly diversify the monotony of conjugal life, like spots of verdure—no quarrels, like oases in the desert of matrimony—no rows.

Sir H. How vulgar! what a brute!

Lady Gay. I never have anything but my own way; and he won't permit me to spend more than I like.

Sir H. Mean-spirited wretch!

Lady Gay. How can I help being miserable?

Sir H. Miserable! I wonder you are not in a lunatic asylum, with such unheard-of barbarity!

Lady Gay. But worse than all that!

Sir H. Can it be out-heroded?

Lady Gay. Yes, I could forgive that—I do—it is my duty. But only imagine—picture to yourself, my dear Sir Harcourt, though I, the third daughter of an Earl, married him out of pity for his destitute and helpless situation as a bachelor with ten thousand a-year—conceive, if you can—he actually permits me, with the most placid indifference, to flirt with any old fool I may meet.

Sir H. Good gracious! miserable idiot!

Lady Gay. I fear there is an incompatibility of temper, which renders a separation inevitable.

Sir H. Indispensable, my dear madam! Ah! had I been the happy possessor of such a realm of bliss—what a beatific eternity unfolds itself to my extending imagination! Had another man but looked at you, I should have

annihilated him at once; and if he had the temerity to speak, his life alone could have expiated his crime.

Lady Gay. Oh, an existence of such a nature is too bright for the eye of thought—too sweet to bear reflection.

Sir H. My devotion, eternal, deep——

Lady Gay. Oh, Sir Harcourt!

Sir H. [*More fervently.*] Your every thought should be a separate study,—each wish forestalled by the quick apprehension of a kindred soul.

Lady Gay. Alas! how can I avoid my fate?

Sir H. If a life—a heart—were offered to your astonished view by one who is considered the index of fashion—the vane of the *beau monde*,—if you saw him at your feet, begging, beseeching your acceptance of all, and more than this, what would your answer——

Lady Gay. Ah! I know of none so devoted!

Sir H. You do! [*Throwing himself upon his knees.*] Behold Sir Harcourt Courtly! [*Meddle jumps up in the chair.*

Lady Gay. [*Aside.*] Ha! ha! Yoicks! Puss has broken cover.

Sir H. Speak, adored, dearest Lady Gay!—speak—will you fly from the tyranny, the wretched misery of such a monster's roof, and accept the soul which lives but in your presence!

Lady Gay. Do not press me. Oh, spare a weak, yielding woman,—be contented to know that you are, alas! too dear to me. But the world—the world would say—

Sir H. Let us be a precedent, to open a more extended and liberal view of matrimonial advantages to society.

Lady Gay. How irresistible is your argument! Oh! pause!

Sir H. I have ascertained for a fact, that every tradesman of mine lives with his wife, and thus you see it has become a vulgar and plebeian custom.

Lady Gay. Leave me; I feel I cannot withstand your powers of persuasion. Swear that you will never forsake me.

Sir H. Dictate the oath. May I grow wrinkled,—may two inches be added to the circumference of my waist,—may I lose the fall in my back,—may I be old and ugly the instant I forego one tithe of adoration!

Lady Gay. I must believe you.

Sir H. Shall we leave this detestable spot—this horrible vicinity ?

Lady Gay. The sooner the better: to-morrow evening let it be. Now let me return; my absence will be remarked. [*He kisses her hand.*] Do I appear confused ? Has my agitation rendered me unfit to enter the room ?

Sir H. More angelic by a lovely tinge of heightened colour.

Lady Gay. To-morrow, in this room, which opens on the lawn.

Sir H. At eleven o'clock.

Lady Gay. Have your carriage in waiting, and four horses. Remember, please be particular to have four; don't let the affair come off shabbily. Adieu, dear Sir Harcourt! [*Exit*, L.

Sir H. Veni, vidi, vici! Hannibal, Cæsar, Napoleon, Alexander never completed so fair a conquest in so short a time. She dropped fascinated. This is an unprecedented example of the irresistible force of personal appearance combined with polished address. Poor creature! how she loves me! I pity so prostrating a passion, and ought to return it. I will: it is a duty I owe to society and fashion. [*Exit*, L.

Med. [*Turns the chair round.*] 'There is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune.' This is my tide—I am the only witness. 'Virtue is sure to find its own reward.' But I've no time to contemplate what I shall be—something huge. Let me see—Spanker *versus* Courtly—Crim. Con.—Damages placed at 150,000*l.* at least, for juries always decimate your hopes.

Enter Spanker, L.

Span. I cannot find Gay anywhere.

Med. The plaintiff himself—I must commence the action. Mr. Spanker, as I have information of deep vital importance to impart, will you take a seat ? [*They sit solemnly. Meddle takes out a note-book and pencil.*] Ahem! You have a wife ?

Re-enter Lady Gay *behind*, L.

Span. Yes, I believe, I——

Med. Will you be kind enough, without any prevarication, to answer my questions?

Span. You alarm—I——

Med. Compose yourself and reserve your feelings; take time to consider. You have a wife?

Span. Yes——

Med. He has a wife—good—a *bona-fide* wife—bound morally and legally to be your wife, and nobody else's in effect, except on your written permission——

Span. But what has this——

Med. Hush! allow me, my dear sir, to congratulate you. [*Shakes his hand.*

Span. What for?

Med. Lady Gay Spanker is about to dishonor the bond of wedlock by eloping from you.

Span. [*Starting.*] What?

Med. Be patient—I thought you would be overjoyed. Place the affair in my hands, and I will venture to promise the largest damages on record.

Span. Damn the damages!—I want my wife. Oh, I'll go and ask her not to run away. She may run away with me—she may hunt—she may ride—anything she likes. Oh, sir, let us put a stop to this affair.

Med. Put a stop to it! do not alarm me, sir. Sir, you will spoil the most exquisite brief that was ever penned. It must proceed—it shall proceed. It is illegal to prevent it, and I will bring an action against you for wilful intent to injure the profession.

Span. Oh, what an ass I am! Oh, I have driven her to this. It was all that damned brandy punch on the top of Burgundy. What a fool I was!

Med. It was the happiest moment of your life.

Span. So I thought at the time; but we live to grow wiser. Tell me, who is the vile seducer?

Med. Sir Harcourt Courtly.

Span. Ha! he is my best friend.

Med. I should think he is. If you will accompany me—here is a verbatim copy of the whole transaction in short-hand—sworn to by me.

Span. Only let me have Gay back again.

Med. Even that may be arranged:—this way.

Span. That ever I should live to see my wife run away.

Oh, I will do any thing—keep two packs of hounds—buy up every horse and ass in England—myself included—oh! [*Exit Span. and Med.* L.

Lady Gay. Ha! ha! ha! Poor Dolly! I'm sorry I must continue to deceive him. If he would kindle up a little—So, that fellow overheard all—well, so much the better.

Enter YOUNG COURTLY, R.

Young C. My dear madam, how fares the plot? does my governor nibble?

Lady Gay. Nibble! he is caught and in the basket. I have just left him with a hook in his gills, panting for very lack of element. But how goes on your encounter?

Young C. Bravely. By a simple ruse, I have discovered that she loves me. I see but one chance against the best termination I could hope.

Lady Gay. What is that?

Young C. My father has told me that I return to town again to-morrow afternoon.

Lady Gay. Well, I insist you stop and dine—keep out of the way.

Young C. Oh, but what excuse shall I offer for disobedience? What can I say when he sees me before dinner?

Lady Gay. Say—say Grace.

Enter GRACE, L., *and gets behind the window curtains.*

Young C. Ha! ha!

Lady Gay. I have arranged to elope with Sir Harcourt myself to-morrow night.

Young C. The deuce you have!

Lady Gay. Now if you could persuade Grace to follow that example—his carriage will be waiting at the Park—be there a little before eleven, and it will just prevent our escape Can you make her agree to that?

Young C. Oh, without the slightest difficulty, if Mr. Augustus Hamilton supplicates.

Lady Gay. Success attend you. [*Going.*]

Young C. I will bend the haughty Grace. [*Going.*]

Lady Gay. Do. [*Exeunt severally.*

Grace. Will you?

END OF ACT IV

ACT V.

Scene I.—*A Drawing-Room in Oak Hall.*

Enter Cool, L.

Cool. This is the most serious affair Sir Harcourt has ever been engaged in. I took the liberty of considering him a fool when he told me he was going to marry: but voluntarily to incur another man's incumbrance is very little short of madness. If he continues to conduct himself in this absurd manner, I shall be compelled to dismiss him.

Enter Sir Harcourt, L., *equipped for travelling.*

Sir H. Cool!

Cool. Sir Harcourt.

Sir H. Is my chariot in waiting?

Cool. For the last half hour at the park wicket. But, pardon the insinuation, sir; would it not be more advisable to hesitate a little for a short reflection before you undertake the heavy responsibility of a woman?

Sir H. No: hesitation destroys the romance of a *faux pas*, and reduces it to the level of a mere mercantile calculation.

Cool. What is to be done with Mr. Charles?

Sir H. Ay, much against my will, Lady Gay prevailed on me to permit him to remain. You, Cool, must return him to College. Pass through London, and deliver these papers: here is a small notice of the coming elopement for the Morning Post; this, by an eye-witness, for the Herald; this, with all the particulars, for the Chronicle; and the full and circumstantial account for the evening journals—after which, meet us at Boulogne.

Cool. Very good, Sir Harcourt. [*Going.*

Sir H. Lose no time. Remember—Hotel Anglais, Boulogne-sur-Mer. And, Cool, bring a few copies with you, and don't forget to distribute some amongst very particular friends.

Cool. It shall be done. [*Exit*, L.

" *Sir H.* With what indifference does a man of the world " view the approach of the most perilous catastrophe! My " position, hazardous as it is, entails none of that nervous

"excitement which a neophyte in the school of fashion "would feel. I am as cool and steady as possible. Ha- "bit, habit! Oh! how many roses will fade upon the cheek "of beauty, when the defalcation of Sir Harcourt Courtly "is whispered—then hinted—at last, confirmed and bruit- "ed. I think I see them. Then, on my return, they will "not dare to eject me—I am their sovereign! Whoever "attempts to think of treason, I'll banish him from the "West End—I'll cut him—I'll put him out of fashion!"

Enter LADY GAY, L.

Lady Gay. Sir Harcourt!

Sir H. At your feet.

Lady Gay. I had hoped you would have repented.

Sir H. Repented!

Lady Gay. Have you not come to say it was a jest?—say you have!

Sir H. Love is too sacred a subject to be trifled with. Come, let us fly! See, I have procured disguises——

Lady Gay. My courage begins to fail me. Let me return.

Sir H. Impossible!

Lady Gay. Where do you intend to take me?

Sir H. You shall be my guide. The carriage waits.

Lady Gay. You will never desert me?

Sir H. Desert! Oh, Heavens! Nay, do not hesitate —flight, now, alone is left to your desperate situation! Come, every moment is laden with danger.

[*They are going.*

Lady Gay. Oh! gracious!

Sir H. Hush! what is it?

Lady Gay. I have forgotten—I must return.

Sir H. Impossible!

Lady Gay. I must! I must! I have left Max—a pet staghound, in his basket—without whom, life would be unendurable—I could not exist!

Sir H. No, no. Let him be sent after us in a hamper.

Lady Gay. In a hamper! Remorseless man! Go—you love me not. How would you like to be sent after me—in a hamper? Let me fetch him. Hark! I hear him squeal! Oh! Max—Max!

Sir H. Hush! for Heaven's sake. They'll imagine

you're calling the Squire. I hear footsteps: where can I retire? [*Goes up*, R.

Enter Meddle, Spanker, Dazzle, *and* Max, L. *Lady Gay screams.*

Med. Spanker versus Courtly!—I subpœna every one of you as witnesses!—I have 'em ready—here they are—shilling a-piece. [*Giving them round.*

Lady Gay. Where is Sir Harcourt?

Med. There!—bear witness!—call on the vile delinquent for protection!

Span. Oh! his protection!

Lady Gay. What? ha!

Med. I'll swear I overheard the whole elopement planned—before any jury!—where's the book?

Span. Do you hear, you profligate?

Lady Gay. Ha! ha! ha! ha!

Daz. But where is this wretched Lothario?

Med. Ay, where is the defendant?

Span. Where lies the hoary villain?

Lady Gay. What villain?

Span. That will not serve you!—I'll not be blinded that way!

Med. We won't be blinded any way!

Max. I must seek Sir Harcourt, and demand an explanation! Such a thing never occurred in Oak Hall before—It must be cleared up! [*Exit*, R.

Med. [*Aside to Spanker.*] Now, take my advice; remember your gender. Mind the notes I have given you.

Span. [*Aside.*] All right! Here they are! Now, madam, I have procured the highest legal opinion on this point.

Med. Hear! hear!

Span. And the question resolves itself into a—into—What's this? [*Looks at notes.*

Med. A nutshell!

Span. Yes, we are in a nutshell. Will you, in every respect, subscribe to my requests—desires—commands—[*Looks at notes*]—orders—imperative—indicative—injunctive—or otherwise?

Lady Gay. [*Aside.*] 'Pon my life, he's actually going to assume the ribbons, and take the box-seat. I must put a

stop to this. I will! It will all end in smoke. I know Sir Harcourt would rather run than fight!

Daz. Oh! I smell powder!—command my services. My dear madam, can I be of any use?

Spon. Oh! a challenge! I must consult my legal adviser.

Med. No! impossible!

Daz. Pooh! the easiest thing in life! Leave it to me: What has an attorney to do with affairs of honour?—they are out of his element.

Med. Compromise the question? Pull his nose!—we have no objection to that.

Daz. [*Turning to Lady Gay.*] Well, we have no objection either—have we?

Lady Gay. No!—pull his nose—that will be something.

Med. And, moreover, it is not exactly actionable!

Daz. Isn't it!—thank you—I'll note down that piece of information—it may be useful.

Med. How! cheated out of my legal knowledge?

Lady Gay. Mr. Spanker, I am determined!—I insist upon a challenge being sent to Sir Harcourt Courtly!—and—mark me—if you refuse to fight him—I will.

Med. Don't. Take my advice—you'll incapacit——

Lady Gay. Look you, Mr. Meddle, unless you wish me to horsewhip you, hold your tongue.

Med. What a she-tiger—I shall retire and collect my costs. [*Exit*, L.

Lady Gay. Mr. Spanker, oblige me by writing as I dictate.

Span. He's gone—and now I am defenceless! Is this the fate of husbands!—A duel!—Is this the result of becoming master of my own family?

Lady Gay. 'Sir, the situation in which you were discovered with my wife, admits neither of explanation nor apology.'

Span. Oh, yes! but it does—I don't believe you really intended to run quite away.

Lady Gay. You do not; but I know better, I say I did! and if it had not been for your unfortunate interruption, I do not know where I might have been by this time. Go on.

Span. 'Nor apology.' I'm writing my own death-war-

rant—committing suicide on compulsion.

Lady Gay. 'The bearer will arrange all preliminary matters; for another day must see this sacrilege expiated by your life, or that of 'Yours very sincerely,

'Dolly Spanker.'

Now, Mr. Dazzle. [*Gives it over his head.*

Daz. The document is as sacred as if it were a hundred-pound bill.

Lady Gay. We trust to your discretion.

Span. His discretion! Oh, put your head in a tiger's mouth, and trust to his discretion!

Daz. [*Sealing letter, &c., with Spanker's seal.*] My dear Lady Gay, matters of this kind are indigenous to my nature, independently of their pervading fascination to all humanity; but this is the more especially delightful, as you may perceive I shall be the intimate and bosom friend of both parties.

Lady Gay. Is it not the only alternative in such a case?

Daz. It is a beautiful panacea in any, in every case. [*Going—returns.*] By the way, where would you like this party of pleasure to come off? Open air shooting is pleasant enough, but if I might venture to advise, we could order half-a-dozen of that Madeira and a box of cigars into the billiard-room, so make a night of it; take up the irons every now and then; string for first shot, and blaze away at one another in an amicable and gentlemanlike way; so conclude the matter before the potency of the liquor could disturb the individuality of the object, or the smoke of the cigars render the outline dubious. Does such an arrangement coincide with your views?

Lady Gay. Perfectly.

Daz. I trust shortly to be the harbinger of happy tidings. [*Exit,* L.

Span. [*Coming foward.*] Lady Gay Spanker, are you ambitious of becoming a widow?

Lady Gay. Why, Dolly, woman is at best but weak, and weeds become me.

Span. Female! am I to be immolated on the altar of your vanity.

Lady Gay. If you become pathetic, I shall laugh.

Span. Farewell—base, heartless, unfeeling woman! [*Exit,* L.

Lady Gay. Ha! well, so I am. I am heartless, for he is a dear, good little fellow, and I ought not to play upon his feelings: but 'pon my life he sounds so well up at concert pitch, that I feel disinclined to untune him. Poor Doll, I didn't think he cared so much about me. I will put him out of pain. [*Exit*, L. *Sir Harcourt comes down.*

Sir H. I have been a fool! a dupe to my own vanity. I shall be pointed at as a ridiculous old coxcomb—and so I am. The hour of conviction is *arrived.* Have I deceived myself?—Have I turned all my senses inwards—looking towards self—always self?—and has the world been ever laughing at me? Well, if they have, I will revert the joke;—they may say I am an old ass; but I will prove that I am neither too old to repent my folly, nor such an ass as to flinch from confessing it. A blow half met is but half felt.

Enter Dazzle, L.

Daz. Sir Harcourt, may I be permitted the honour of a few minutes' conversation with you?

Sir H. With pleasure.

Daz. Have the kindness to throw your eye over that.

[*Gives letter.*

Sir H. [*Reads.*] 'Situation—my wife—apology—expiate—my life.' Why, this is intended for a challenge.

Daz. Why, indeed, I am perfectly aware that it is not quite *en regle* in the couching, for with that I had nothing to do; but I trust that the irregularity of the composition will be confounded in the beauty of the subject.

Sir H. Mr. Dazzle, are you in earnest?

Daz. Sir Harcourt Courtly, upon my honour I am, and I hope that no previous engagement will interfere with an immediate reply in *propria persona.* We have fixed upon the billiard room as the scene of action, which I have just seen properly illuminated in honour of the occasion; and, by the bye, if your implements are not handy, I can oblige you with a pair of the sweetest things you ever handled—hair-triggered—saw grip; heir-looms in my family. I regard them almost in the light of relations.

Sir H. Sir, I shall avail myself of one of your relatives. [*Aside.*] One of the hereditaments of my folly—I must accept it. [*Aloud.*] Sir, I shall be happy to meet Mr. Spanker at any time or place he may appoint.

Daz. The sooner the better, sir. Allow me to offer you my arm. I see you understand these matters;—my friend Spanker is wofully ignorant—miserably uneducated.

[*Exeunt*, L.

Re-enter Max, *with* Grace, R.

Max. Give ye joy, girl, give ye joy. Sir Harcourt Courtly must consent to waive all title to your hand in favour of his son Charles.

Grace. Oh, indeed! Is that the pith of your congratulation—humph! the exchange of an old fool for a young one? Pardon me if I am not able to distinguish the advantage.

Max. Advantage!

Grace. Moreover, by what right am I a transferable cipher in the family of Courtly? So, then, my fate is reduced to this, to sacrifice my fortune, or unite myself with a worm-eaten edition of the Classics!

Max. Why, he certainly is not such a fellow as I could have chosen for my little Grace; but consider, to retain fifteen thousand a-year! Now, tell me honestly—but why should I say *honestly*? Speak, girl, would you rather not have the lad?

Grace. Why do you ask me?

Max. Why, look ye, I'm an old fellow; another hunting season or two, and I shall be in at my own death—I can't leave you this house and land, because they are entailed, nor can I say I'm sorry for it, for it is a good law; but I have a little box with my Grace's name upon it, where, since your father's death and miserly will, I have yearly placed a certain sum to be yours, should you refuse to fulfil the conditions prescribed.

Grace. My own dear uncle!

[*Clasping him round the neck.*

Max. Pooh! pooh! what's to do now? Why, it was only a trifle—why, you little rogue, what are you crying about?

Grace. Nothing, but——

Max. But what? Come, out with it: Will you have young Courtly?

Re-enter Lady Gay, L.

Lady Gay. Oh! Max, Max!

Max. Why, what's amiss with you?

Lady Gay. I'm a wicked woman!

Max. What have you done?

Lady Gay. Everything—oh, I thought Sir Harcourt was a coward, but now I find a man may be a coxcomb without being a poltroon. Just to show my husband how inconvenient it is to hold the ribands sometimes, I made him send a challenge to the old fellow, and he, to my surprise, accepted it, and is going to blow my Dolly's brains out in the billiard-room.

Max. The devil!

Lady Gay. Just when I imagined I had got my whip hand of him again, out comes my linch-pin—and over I go—oh!

Max. I will soon put a stop to that—a duel under my roof! Murder in Oak Hall! I'll shoot them both!

[*Exit*, L.

Grace. Are you really in earnest?

Lady Gay. Do you think it looks like a joke? Oh! Dolly, if you allow yourself to be shot, I will never forgive you—never! Ah, he is a great fool, Grace! but I can't tell why, I would sooner lose my bridle hand than he should be hurt on my account.

Enter Sir Harcourt, L.

Tell me—tell me—have you shot him—is he dead—my dear Sir Harcourt? You horrid old brute—have you killed him? I shall never forgive myself. [*Exit*, L

Grace. Oh! Sir Harcourt, what has happened?

Sir H. Don't be alarmed, I beg—your uncle interrupted us—discharged the weapons—locked the challenger up in the billiard-room to cool his rage.

Grace. Thank Heaven!

Sir H. Miss Grace, to apologise for my conduct were useless, more especially as I am confident that no feelings of indignation or sorrow for my late acts are cherished by you; but still, reparation is in my power, and I not only waive all title, right, or claim to your person or your fortune, but freely admit your power to bestow them on a more worthy object.

Grace. This generosity, Sir Harcourt, is most unexpected.

Sir H. No, not generosity, but simply justice, justice!

Grace. May I still beg a favour?

Sir H. Claim anything that is mine to grant.

Grace. You have been duped by Lady Gay Spanker, I have also been cheated and played upon by her and Mr. Hamilton—may I beg that the contract between us, may, to all appearances, be still held good?

Sir H. Certainly, although I confess I cannot see the point of your purpose.

Enter MAX, *with* YOUNG COURTLY, L.

Max. Now, Grace, I have brought the lad.

Grace. Thank you, uncle, but the trouble was quite unnecessary—Sir Harcourt holds to his original contract.

Max. The deuce he does!

Grace. And I am willing—nay, eager, to become Lady Courtly.

Young C. [*Aside.*] The deuce you are!

Max. But, Sir Harcourt——

Sir H. One word, Max, for an instant. [*They retire,* L.

Young C. [*Aside.*] What can this mean? Can it be possible that I have been mistaken—that she is not in love with Augustus Hamilton?

Grace. Now we shall find how he intends to bend the haughty Grace.

Young C. Madam—Miss, I mean,—are you really in earnest—are you in love with my father?

Grace. No, indeed I am not.

Young C. Are you in love with any one else?

Grace. No, or I should not marry him.

Young C. Then you actually accept him as your real husband?

Grace. In the common acceptation of the word.

Young C. [*Aside.*] Hang me if I have not been a pretty fool! [*Aloud.*] Why do you marry him, if you don't care about him?

Grace. To save my fortune.

Young C. [*Aside.*] Mercenary, cold-hearted girl! [*Aloud.*] But if there be any one you love in the least—marry him; —were you never in love?

Grace. Never!

Young C. [*Aside.*] Oh! what an ass I've been! [*Aloud.*]

I heard Lady Gay mention something about a Mr. Hamilton.

Grace. Ah, yes, a person who, after an acquaintanceship of two days, had the assurance to make love to me, and I——

Young C. Yes,—you—Well?

Grace. I pretended to receive his attentions.

Young C. [*Aside.*] It was the best pretence I ever saw.

Grace. An absurd, vain, conceited coxcomb, who appeared to imagine that I was so struck with his fulsome speech, that he could turn me round his finger.

Young C. [*Aside.*] My very thoughts!

Grace. But he was mistaken.

Young C. [*Aside.*] Confoundedly! [*Aloud.*] Yet you seemed rather concerned about the news of his death.

Grace. His accident? No, but——

Young C. But what?

Grace. [*Aside.*] What can I say? [*Aloud.*] Ah! but my maid Pert's brother is a post-boy, and I thought he might have sustained an injury, poor boy.

Young C. [*Aside.*] Damn the post-boy! [*Aloud.*] Madam, if the retention of your fortune be the plea on which you are about to bestow your hand on one you do not love, and whose very actions speak his carelessness for that inestimable jewel he is incapable of appreciating—know that I am devotedly, madly attached to you.

Grace. You, sir? Impossible!

Young C. Not at all,—but inevitable,—I have been so for a long time.

Grace. Why, you never saw me till last night.

Young C. I have seen you in imagination—you are the ideal I have worshipped.

Grace. Since you press me into a confession,—which nothing but this could bring me to speak,—know, I did love poor Augustus Hamilton—

Re-enter Max *and* Sir Harcourt.

but he—he is—no—more! Pray, spare me, sir.

Young C. [*Aside.*] She loves me! And, oh! what a situation I am in!—if I own I am the man, my governor will overhear, and ruin me—if I do not, she'll marry him. —What is to be done?

Enter Lady Gay, L.

Lady Gay. Where have you put my Dolly? I have been racing all round the house—tell me, is he quite dead!

Max. I'll have him brought in. [*Exit*, L.

Sir H. My dear madam, you must perceive this unfortunate occurrence was no fault of mine. I was compelled to act as I have done—I was willing to offer any apology, but that resource was excluded, as unacceptable.

Lady Gay. I know—I know—'twas I made him write that letter—there was no apology required—'twas I that apparently seduced you from the paths of propriety:—'twas all a joke, and here is the end of it.

Enter Max, Spanker, *and* Dazzle, L.

Oh! if he had but lived to say, "I forgive you, Gay!"

Span. So I do!

Lady Gay. [*Seeing him.*] Ah! he is alive!

Span. Of course I am!

Lady Gay. Ha! ha! ha! [*Embraces him.*] I will never hunt again—unless you wish it. Sell your stable——

Span. No, no—do what you like—say what you like for the future! I find the head of a family has less ease and more responsibility than I, as a member, could have anticipated. I abdicate!

Enter Cool, L.

Sir H. Ah! Cool, here! [*Aside to Cool.*] You may destroy those papers—I have altered my mind, and I do not intend to elope at present. Where are they?

Cool. As you seemed particular, Sir Harcourt, I sent them off to London by mail.

Sir H. Why, then, a full description of the whole affair will be published to-morrow.

Cool. Most irretrievably!

Sir H. You must post to town immediately, and stop the press.

Cool. Beg pardon—but they would see me hanged first. Sir Harcourt, they don't frequently meet with such a profitable lie.

Servant. [*Without.*] No, sir! no, sir!

Enter Simpson, L.

Simpson. Sir, there's a gentleman, who calls himself Mr. Solomon Isaacs, insists upon following me up. [*Exit*, L.

Enter Mr. Solomon Isaacs, L.

Isaacs. Mr. Courtly, you will excuse my performance of a most disagreeable duty at any time, but more especially in such a manner. I must beg the honour of your company to town.

Sir H. What! how! what for?

Isaacs. For debt, Sir Harcourt.

Sir H. Arrested? impossible! Here must be some mistake.

Isaacs. Not the slightest, sir. Judgment has been given in five cases, for the last three months; but Mr. Courtly is an eel rather too nimble for my men. We have been on his track, and traced him down to this village, with Mr. Dazzle.

Daz. Ah! Isaacs! how are you?

Isaacs. Thank you, sir. [*Speaks to Sir H.*]

Max. Do you know him?

Daz. Oh, intimately! Distantly related to his family—same arms on our escutcheon—empty purse falling thro' a hole in a—pocket: motto, 'Requiascet in pace'—which means, 'Let virtue be its own reward.'

Sir H. [*To Isaacs.*] Oh, I thought there was a mistake! Know, to your misfortune, that Mr. Hamilton was the person you dogged to Oak Hall, between whom and my son a most remarkable likeness exists.

Isaacs. Ha! ha! Know, to your misfortune, Sir Harcourt, that Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Courtly are one and the same person!

Sir H. Charles!

Young C. Concealment is in vain—I am Augustus Hamilton.

Sir H. Hang me if I didn't think it all along! Oh! you infernal, cozening dog! [*Crosses to him.*

Isaacs. Now, then, Mr. Hamilton——

Grace. Stay, sir—Mr. Charles Courtly is under age—ask his father.

Sir H. Ahem!—I won't—I won't pay a shilling of the rascal's debts—not a sixpence!

Grace. Then I will—you may retire. [*Exit Isaacs*, L.

Young C. I can now perceive the generous point of your conduct towards me; and, believe me, I appreciate, and will endeavour to deserve it.

Max. Ha! ha! Come, Sir Harcourt, you have been fairly beaten—you must forgive him—say you will.

Sir H. So, sir, it appears you have been leading, covertly, an infernal town life?

Young C. Yes, please, father.

[*Imitating Master Charles.*

Sir H. None of your humbug, sir! [*Aside.*] He is my own son—how could I expect him to keep out of the fire? [*Aloud.*] And you, Mr. Cool!—have you been deceiving me?

Cool. Oh! Sir Harcourt, if *your* perception was played upon, how could *I* be expected to see? [*Exit*, L.

Sir H. Well, it would be useless to withhold my hand. There, boy! [*He gives his hand to Young Courtly. Grace comes down on the other side and offers her hand; he takes it.*] What is all this? What do you want?

Young C. Your blessing, father.

Grace. If you please, father.

Sir H. Oho! the mystery is being solved. So, so, you young scoundrel, you have been making love—under the rose.

Lady Gay. He learnt that from you, Sir Harcourt.

Sir H. Ahem! What would you do now, if I were to withhold my consent?

Grace. Do without it.

Max. The will says, if Grace marries any one but you, her property reverts to your heir-apparent—and there he stands.

Lady Gay. Make a virtue of necessity.

Span. I married from inclination, and see how happy I am. And if ever I have a son——

Lady Gay. Hush! Dolly, dear!

Sir H. Well! take her, boy! Although you are too young to marry. [*They retire with Max.*

Lady Gay. Am I forgiven, Sir Harcourt?

Sir H. Ahem! Why—a—[*Aside.*] Have you really deceived me?

Lady Gay. Can you not see through this?

Sir H. And you still love me?

Lady Gay. As much as I ever did.

Sir H. [*Is about to kiss her hand, when Spanker interposes between.*] A very handsome ring, indeed.

Span. Very. [*Puts her arm in his, and they go up.*

Sir H. Poor little Spanker!

Max. [*Coming down, aside to Sir H.*] One point I wish to have settled. Who is Mr. Dazzle?

Sir H. A relative of the Spankers, he told me.

Max. Oh, no, a near connexion of yours.

Sir H. Never saw him before I came down here, in all my life. [*To Young Courtly.*] Charles, who is Mr. Dazzle?

Young C. Dazzle, Dazzle,—will you excuse an impertinent question?—but who the deuce are you?

Daz. Certainly. I have not the remotest idea.

All. How, sir?

Daz. Simple question as you may think it, it would puzzle half the world to answer. One thing I can vouch —Nature made me a gentleman—that is, I live on the best that can be procured for credit. I never spend my own money when I can oblige a friend. I'm always thick on the winning horse. I'm an epidemic on the trade of tailor. For further particulars, inquire of any sitting magistrate.

Sir H. And these are the deeds which attest your title to the name of gentleman? I perceive you have caught the infection of the present age. Charles, permit me, as your father, and you, sir, as his friend, to correct you on one point. Barefaced assurance is the vulgar substitute for gentlemanly ease; and there are many, who, by aping the *vices* of the great, imagine that they elevate themselves to the rank of those, whose faults alone they copy. No! sir. The title of gentleman is the only one *out* of any monarch's gift, yet within the reach of every peasant. It should be engrossed by *Truth*—stamped with *Honor*—sealed with *good-feeling*—signed *Man*—and enrolled in every true young English heart.

THE END.

No. XXVIII.

MODERN STANDARD DRAMA.

EDITED BY EPES SARGENT.

Author of "Velasco, a Tragedy," &c

THE RENT-DAY

A Domestic Drama.

IN THREE ACTS.

BY DOUGLAS JERROLD.

WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS, CAST OF CHARACTERS, COSTUMES, RELATIVE POSITIONS, &c.

AS ORIGINALLY PERFORMED BY MR. JAMES WALLACK AT DRURY LANE.

NEW YORK:

WM. TAYLOR & CO., No. 2 ASTOR HOUSE,

AND JARVIS BUILDINGS, NORTH ST., BALTIMORE.

BOSTON:—REDDING AND COMPANY, 8 STATE STREET.

PHILADELPHIA:—G. B. ZEIBER AND CO., 3 LEDGER BUILDING.

NEW ORLEANS:—J. C. MORGAN, AND JOHN SLY.

1846.

PRICE 12 1 2 CENTS.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

	Drury Lane, 1832.	*Park*, 1832.	*Boston*, 1846.
Martin Heywood ...	Mr. Jas. Wallack.	Mr. Jas. Wallack.	Mr. Jas. Wallack.
Grantley	" Brindal.	" Jackson.	" Gallagher.
Old Crumbs.....	" Younge.	" Clarke.	" Gilbert.
Toby Heywood.....	" Cooper.	" Barry.	" Fleming.
Bullfrog	" Harley.	" Placide.	" T. Placide.
Silver Jack	" H. Wallack.	" Simpson.	" Bland.
Hyssop	" Bedford.	" Richings.	" H. Russell.
Beanstalk.....	" Hughes.	" Blakely.	" Benson.
Stephen	" Salter.	" Nexsen.	" Adams.
First Farmer		" Hayden.	" Germon.
Second Farmer.....	" C. Jones.	" Conway.	" Stephens.
Burly.....	" Hatton.	" Collet.	" Parker.
Sailor	" Heaton.	" Harvey.	" Parsons.
Rachel Heywood....	Miss Phillips.	Mrs. Sharpe.	Mrs. Bland.
Polly Briggs	Mrs. Humby.	" Vernon.	Miss Bequet.
Dame Beanstalk....		" Durie.	Mrs. Johnson.

Farmers, Farmers' Wives, Children, &c.

☞ *The Costumes are those of the characters in Sir David Wilkie's Pictures of the "Rent-Day" and "Distraining for Rent."*

EXITS AND ENTRANCES.

R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; R. D. *Right Door*; L. D. *Left Door*; S. E. *Second Entrance*; U. E. *Upper Entrance*; M. D. *Middle Door*.

RELATIVE POSITIONS.

R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; C. *Centre*; R. C. *Right of Centre*; L. C. *Left of Centre*.

EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION.

THE "Rent-Day" was originally produced the latter part of January, 1832, at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. The first hints for the plot appear to have been furnished by Sir David Wilkie's celebrated pictures of the "Rent-Day" and "Distraining for Rent." With the quick sympathies of genius, Douglas Jerrold interrogated the dumb characters upon the canvas, till they gave up their story; and thus, from a couple of pictures, he evolved a drama of powerful domestic interest, and evoked a living embodiment of the creations of the limner's brush.

The following letter from Sir David Wilkie to Stanfield, the artist, in reference to this drama, will be read with interest. We are indebted to Mr. James Wallack for the original, which is now for the first time published:

Kensington, Jan 27th, 1832.

DEAR MR. STANFIELD,

I went last night to the Theatre, Drury Lane, and cannot express how much I was gratified by the compliment paid to my humble performances in the dramatic representation of the "Rent-Day." Would you, therefore, if occasion offers, give assurance of how much I feel obligated to those who, with yourself, have contributed to render this scenic representation perfect; and particularly to Mr. Jerrold, whose inventive fancy has created out of the dumb shew of a picture, all the living characters and progressive events of real life; and, while paying an unprecedented honour from the dramatic to the painter's art, has, with the help of life, movement, space, and time, shown us in comparison how stationary and how confined is that *one instant*, to which our elaborate art is limited. Without being a judge at all of the merits of dramatic composition, I cannot help expressing how much I was struck with the preparation and completion of the Tableau of the "Distraint," which, in acting, had much of the effect of the denouement of the play acted before the King in Hamlet—the surprise of an expected event.

The second act appeared to me, in its conduct and arrangements, as indicating great skill in the contrivance of incidents dependent upon the articles of furniture already upon the stage: such proof of resource in the talented writer, one is proud to see combined with the power of keeping up the attention of the auditory by the easy succession of scenes, which, like the scenic skill I have heard much admired in Massinger, advances the story step by step, without delay and without confusion, to the end of the play. Miss Phillips and Mr. Wallack appeared to show great good

taste, as well as power, in the afflicted pair. The lady's reply to the proposed emigration, was, indeed, most touching; and Mr. Wallack, when he appeared, by his dress and look, so like what I once painted, quite startled me as he came upon the stage. The whole, I may say, was to me a new gratification—unexpected for works in my humble style, and, I fear, very undeserved. My dear sir, pray give to all who have contributed, and receive also yourself, my most respectful and hearty thanks.

Most faithfully and truly yours,

DAVID WILKIE.

C. Stanfield. Esq.

The success of this drama at Drury Lane, was such as one might infer from its obvious merits. A critic of the day says of it: "We have seldom felt more interested in any performance. The pictures are excellent; and this praise extends not only to those which have been borrowed from the painter, but to several—Martin surrounded by his children; the robber scene; Rachel fainting across her husband's knee; the broken chair; and the *finale*, where the painter in turn may be indebted to the compositions of the stage manager. H. Wallack is a most amusing thief; and his companion, Bedford, must have studied his dress, voice, action, and manner, in the airing yards of Newgate. Mr. Younge must not be offended when we say, that only Farren could have improved *Old Crumbs;* Wallack's *Martin* scarcely admits of amendment. Miss Phillips, as *Rachel*, justifies all our partiality. Mrs. Humby was not over-dressed; and Harley kept his vivacity within the boundaries of probabilities."

At all the principal theatres in the United States, Mr. Wallack has repeatedly produced this drama with the same success that attended its original representation. It has also been frequently performed when the part of *Martin* was sustained by inferior actors; and still its popularity is such, that it promises long to retain its place upon the stage, as one of our most acceptable stock plays. Among the other dramatic productions of Mr Jerrold, his "Black-Eyed Susan" and his five-act comedy of "Time Works Wonders" are worthy of especial commendation. Indeed, in the department of the drama, he has shown talents sufficient to make us regret that they are not exclusively devoted to its support. As the author of the celebrated "Caudle Lectures," he is also favourably known to the lovers of the humorous. At present, he is the conductor of two or three periodical publications, which have attained, in a short period, a remarkable degree of prosperity.

THE RENT-DAY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in Grantley Hall. Discovered,* CRUMBS (*the Steward*), BEANSTALK, *Farmers, their Wives and Children, Servants, &c. The Characters and Stage so arranged as to form, on the rising of the Curtain, a representation of Wilkie's Picture of* "RENT DAY." *A large archway in front, and a door beyond.*

Crumbs. BY my heart! there's naught so pleasant as a rent-day.

Bean. Thee be'st right, master Crumbs; naught;—when the corn's in the barn and the money in the bag; but rent-day, wi' bad crops and low pockets, be an awful thing.

1*st Far.* It be, indeed. See what it ha' brought Phil Jones to. That seizure, master Crumbs, ha' broke his heart. Warn't you a bit hasty like?

Crumbs. Ha, friends! it's a sad task to be steward! I often seize with tears in my eyes. What then? we must keep a clear book. I never turn out a family but—[*To one of the Farmers.*]—you don't drink your ale, master Stoke—with the greatest reluctance. Last week, when Miles and his children went to the workhouse, it—[*To another Farmer,*]—help your dame to some pie—it made me really uneasy. Yet one's feelings must suffer. One must keep a clear book.

Bean. Where be Martin Heywood, I wonder? Ha! things ha' ne'er gone right since the old man died of a sudden. I had hopes to see Martin here.

Crumbs. I've had hopes, some time past. But here's a toast: [*Fills a glass.*] Here's punctuality to all tenants.

[*They drink—looking significantly at each other.*

Bean. Come, I'll gi' thee another. Here be mercy and liberality to all landlords!

All—except Crumbs. Well said. Mercy to all landlords! [*Drinking.*

Bean. Why, Master Crumbs, be there a spider in the glass?—thee dost not drink. Come, "mercy," man. There be few on us, I fear, would be worse for a little more on't. Tak' another sup.

Crumbs. No more. There, Master Beanstalk, is your receipt—there, friend Thomas, [*Giving various papers to Farmers,*] is yours. As for that matter about the tithes, Master Hodge, we must talk on't. All our business is now despatched, and I'll drain another glass to our next merry meeting.— [*All rise, having filled their glasses.*

Bean. Stay. I'll clap a tail to that toast: so drink "Good fortune to Master Heywood!"

All. Ay! ay!

Bean Stop: and his wife, Rachel—not yet—and all his darling little babes—God bless 'em! [*All drink.*] Why, Master Crumbs, what makes thee look so blank! It be a bad sign, if a man make wry faces when he hears luck wished to another.

Crumbs. Wry faces! you mistake. But you take a good deal of interest in Martin Heywood.

Bean. Naturally. I ha' known him ever since he could ha' lain in my hat. My dame, here, stood for his wife, Rachel; and a blessed little blossom she was. If it had'nt been for bad times,—but I won't brag. [*Retires amongst Farmers. 2d Farmer comes down to Crumbs.*

2*d Far.* Now, good master steward, you'll give me time, I hope?

Crumbs. Time is'nt in my gift, if I would.

2*d Far.* I have a wife and eight children.

Crumbs. A marvellous pity; but I must make up my book.

2*d Far.* Give me but two months.

Crumbs. You shall have two weeks. Don't reckon on an hour more. Two weeks, and then I sell every stick.

2*d Far.* Have you no heart?

Crumbs. I must make up my book!—Two weeks.

[*Farmer retires. Beanstalk, who, with others, has filled his glass, comes down and forces a glass on Crumbs.*

Bean. I say, Master Crumbs, the old toast at parting. "Here's mercy to all landlords!"

Crumbs. [*Unwillingly drinking.*] "Mercy—landlords!" —Farewell, farewell!—[*All exeunt but Crumbs, arch,* F.] They're gone; now to sort the money. [*Employs himself sorting papers, notes, &c.*] Heywood must pack. The farm must come into my hands. Let me reckon. Another twelvemonth,—the landlord still away, and my fortune is complete. I have scraped, and scratched, and wrung!—'Tis very well. Such another year, and farewell, England.

[Silver Jack *and* Hyssop *looking in arch,* F.

Jack. [*Pointing out Crumbs to Hyssop.*] 'Tis he! I'll swear it!

Crumbs. Who's there? [*Jack and Hyssop disappear.*

Enter Stephen, *with letters,* R.

Is it you, Stephen, talking to yourself!

Ste. Talking, sir? not I. Here be letters: this, from London; it has our master's crest. [*Retires up.*

Crumbs. Master! Humph! [*Reads.*] 'Tis from young Spendthrift. The old style: more money. He shall have it.

Toby. [*Without, behind,* F.] No, no; I'll walk in. When he sees me, he'll be sure I'm here.

Enter Toby Heywood, *from door and through arch.—Stephen comes down,* R.

Servant, Master Crumbs.

Crumbs. Servant; I'd had hoped to see your brother, Martin. [*To Stephen, half aside.*] Stephen, go to Bullfrog. Tell him to come to me to-night; I shall have business for him. Ay, and call on Burly, too, and tell him the same.

[*Exit Stephen,* R. 1. E.

Toby. Bullfrog and Burly! What devil's feast's afoot, that they must have a spoon in?

Crumbs. All trades must be filled: Bullfrog's is an ugly one.

Toby. Ay; but the ugliest trades have their moments of pleasure. Now, if I were a grave-digger, or even a hang man, there are some people [*Glancing at Crumbs*] I could work for with a great deal of enjoyment.

Crumbs. That Bullfrog's maxim; he's very merry.

Toby. The most jovial of brokers and appraisers. He

levies a distress as though he brought a card of invitation; giggles himself into possession; makes out the inventory with a chuckle; and carts off chairs and tables to "Begone dull care!" or, "How merrily we live who shepherds be."

Crumbs. True, in these matters he has a coolness.

Toby. Coolness! he'd eat oysters whilst his neighbour's house was in flames—always provided that his own was insured. Coolness! he's a piece of marble, carved into a broad grin!

Crumbs. Well, well, your business with me?

Toby. My brother, Martin, has been once more disappointed.

Crumbs. So have I.

Toby. That's lucky. You'll be better able to feel for him.

Crumbs. I want money.

Toby. So does he.

Crumbs. I'll give time, if there be any one to answer for him. Can't you assist him? have you nothing?

Toby. Yes: fifteen pounds a year, as principal usher to the town free-school. My goods and chattels are a volume of "Robinson Crusoe;" ditto "Pilgrim's Progress;" with "Plutarch's Morals," much like the morals of many other people,—a good deal dog's-eared. If my uncle had made me a ploughman, instead of a mongrel scholar, I might have a mouldy guinea or so.

Crumbs. But has your brother no one to speak for him?

Toby. Yes. There are two.

Crumbs. Where shall I find them?

Toby. In the church-yard. His grandfather and his father lie there. Go to the graves of the old men, and these are the words the dead will say to you: "We lived sixty years in Holly Farm. In all that time we never begged an hour of the 'Squire. We paid rent, tax, and tithe: we earned our bread with our own hands, and owed no man a penny when laid down here. Well, then, will ye be hard on young Heywood? will ye press upon our child, our poor Martin, when murrain has come upon his cattle, and blight fallen upon his corn?" This is what the dead will say. I should like to know what the living has to answer?

Crumbs. [*Handing over the Squire's letter.*] This.

Toby. [*Opening it.*] From the young Squire. [*Reads.*]

"*Master Crumbs, use all despatch, and send me, on the receipt of this,* £500. *Cards have tricked me, and the devil cogged the dice. Get the money at all costs, and quickly. Robert Grantly.*" Ay, a right true letter from an absent landlord.

Crumbs. 'Tis hard to be steward to a wild youth, who looks not after his own estate. You see, he leaves me no discretion.

Toby. Oh, no! If the landlord lose at gaming, his tenants must suffer for't. The 'Squire plays a low card,—issue a distress warrant! He throws deuce-ace,—turn a family into the fields! 'Tis only awkward to lose hundreds on a card; but very rascally to be behind-hand with one's rent!

Crumbs. As you say—very true.—Good morning, Master Toby.

Toby. Good morning. Poor brother Martin wouldn't come himself, and so I thought I'd step up and speak to you. But I'll tell him that you'll give him all time, and that he's not to make himself uneasy, and all that. I'll comfort him, depend on't. And, I say; when you write back to the 'Squire, you can tell him, by way of postscript, if he must feed the gaming-table, not to let it be with money, wrung, like blood, from the wretched. Just tell him, whilst he shuffles the cards, to remember the aching hearts of his distressed tenants. And when he'd rattle the dice, let him stop and think of the knuckles of the bailiff and the tax-gatherer, knocking at the cottage doors of the poor. Good morning, Mr. Steward; good morning.

[*Exit through arch and door in* F.

Crumbs. Now to give my instructions to the beadle and appraiser, and out he goes. [*Exit,* R. 1. E.

Scene II.—*A Rustic View.*

Enter Jack *and* Hyssop, L. S. E.

Hys. [*To Jack, who is looking back.*] Come, come; why do you loiter?

Jack. Don't you see that woman still at the style?—the prettiest creature I've looked on this many a day.

Hys. Tush! now we're on business. Go on with your story. Let me see, where did that wench's black eyes in-

terrupt us? Oh! you were about to tell me how you knew that this steward, Crumbs, as he is called, was your master, when you took to live by your wits, and the nimbleness of your five fingers. Now, are you sure you know him?

Jack. Do I know my own hand? Thirty years ago, when but a boy, I ran away from my apprenticeship—

Hys. Ay, of rope-making: a fatal profession. Go on.

Jack. Pshaw! I fell in with John Harris—for that's his real name—in London. He was a knight of the road, of the first order; kept as pretty a blood, and shuffled a card better than any baronet of St. James's. Bless you! he gave the fashion to Hounslow and Finchley. Well, Newgate hath clipped many a brave fellow's wing! Captain Harris was taken, tried, and condemned for Tyburn.

Hys. Then he got a reprieve?

Jack. Yes, in the way of some files, sent to him in a pigeon-pie, and twenty fathom of cord, baked in a few loaves. He gave them the slip, and started for the Indies. There, I heard, he met with an Englishman, was brought back again, and here he is. Have you a mind to earn fifty pounds?

Hys. If 't may be done with the leisure of a gentleman.

Jack. 'Tis but to open your mouth. See: [*Takes out a seal-skin tobacco pouch, and from it an old hand-bill. Gives it to Hys.*] I have worn it about me for many a long day.

Hys. [*Reading the bill.*] "Fifty pounds reward! Escaped from Newgate! John Harris, a convict. He is five feet ten; of darkish complexion; oval face; quick black eyes, with an eager look: his mouth large and restless; his hair a deep chesnut brown, in close curls. His voice is full, and his manner of speaking, rapid. His pace is short and hurried. Has a scar over the left eye; also a scar on the back of the left hand." This can never be the picture of that old man?

Jack. Why, 'tis seven-and-twenty years since he sat for it: that's some time for one who hasn't walked upon velvet. Why, even *I* am changed. I can remember when my mother used to call me her "lovely little Jack." As for Harris, 'twould have done you good to hear him cry "Stand!"—it came sharp upon you, like the click of a trigger. Step aside, Hyssop; here are two of the natives.

[*They retire amongst the trees,* L. S. E.

Enter Polly Briggs, Bullfrog *following her*, r.

Pol. Now, Mr. Bullfrog, don't tease me.

Bull. I tease! I should like to know how a man with a freehold of twenty pounds per year, a pretty business, and a genteel figure, could tease, even if he would? It's only poor people who tease: we moneyed men delight!

Pol. Well, I'm very poor, Mr. Bullfrog.

Bul. You are: it's your only fault.

Pol. Fault! poverty's no crime.

Bul. Isn't it? well, it's so like, I don't know the difference. It's a pity poor girls have pretty faces; they lead us prudent capitalists into many false reckonings. Oh, Polly! if I should love you!

Pol. La! what should you see to love in me?

Bul. See! why, there's a beautiful face, with its streaks of red, and the blue veins running up and down the white skin, for all the world like the ruled pages of a new leger!

Pol. White skin! Wouldn't you be better pleased if it were yellow?

Bul. La! why?

Pol. 'Twould remind you of your guineas, you know. And, I'm sure, you love nothing so well.

Bul. Yes, one thing—almost: that pretty little red mouth! Oh, Polly! if you had but a small annuity, or expectations from a sick aunt, or anything of that kind, you'd be a perfect woman.—But I must have a kiss.

Pol. A kiss! I never heard of such a thing!

Enter Toby Heywood, r.

Bul. What an ignorant young woman you must be. A kiss is— [*He is approaching her, when Toby comes down between them.*

Toby. She knows. I taught her long ago. And harkye, Master Bullfrog!

Bul. Now be cool. I'm always cool.

Toby. You'll still be meddling. Don't you remember that you were *once* kicked?

Bull. Yes. And wasn't I a picture of patience? Did I fly into a rage? No: I flung myself upon the laws. I made twenty pounds by that job, and that didn't make me conceited, either.

Toby. Take care, or I may kick, too!

Bul. No. Prudence won't let you.

Toby. Why not?

Bul. You can't afford to pay for luxuries!

Toby. Oh! on such an occasion, I'd not mind running in debt! [*To Polly.*] But, Polly, go to the farm; run and comfort Rachel. Leave the appraiser to me. Go. [*Exit Polly*, L. 1. E.] What! waste your valuable time with a girl not worth a groat?

Bul. That's true. And I ought to be down at Brown's, the millwright.

Toby. Ha! No use going there. I'm told they barricade doors and windows. You'll never get in there.

Bul. Ha! ha! You don't know my wit. I took possession this morning.

Toby. Why, how?

Bul. Such a scheme! About an hour after Brown had let himself out of the window, I got a little girl to go and knock at the door, and call for Mrs. Brown. I taught her her lesson; this was it: "Mrs. Brown, for Heaven's sake!"—I made her say "Heaven," because it sounded more real.

Toby. Yes, Heaven is a good word to lie under.

Bul. Bless you! I've found it so. "For Heaven's sake, come to your husband! he's chopped his leg clean through with an axe!" You should have heard Mrs. Brown scream! Out she ran, wringing her hands, her three children tumbling after her: and in I and the beadle walked.

Toby. Then 'twas all a lie?

Bul. Lord love you, only my wit. And so I told Mrs. Brown; and bade her wipe her eyes, and make herself comfortable, whilst I took down the goods. I shall sell on Thursday.

Toby. Sell! You are throwing away your time, knocking down tea-cups and wooden dishes. You should go to the colonies, and sell the blacks.

Bul. I certainly do pass off an article with a flourish.

Toby. Flourish! how capitally you'd dispose of a man, his wife, and six children!

Bul. I'm not conceited; but I think I should. Hem! "Ladies and gentlemen, the next lot consists of eight mortals."—Stop, are blacks mortals?

Toby. Why, with some, its a matter of doubt, so let them have the benefit of it.

Bul. "Eight mortals. How much shall we say for the lot?"

Toby. Or you might ask,—"How much for the man? a strong-bodied labourer, a virtuous husband, and an affectionate father. He weighs fourteen stone, hasn't a single vice, stands five feet eleven, is very handsome, and is going at only a handful of dollars."

Bul. Must you talk about affection, and all that?

Toby. Of course. Virtue is especially marketable in the West Indies. There, it's worth while being a constant husband and a doting parent; for one sells for a few dollars extra. Go to Jamaica, by all means.

Bul. I think I should succeed.

Toby. Succeed! After your story to Mrs. Brown, if your own father were going by auction, you'd knock him down with the greatest grace in life.

Bul. Now you flatter!

Toby. Impossible. With you, there's no improving upon truth.

Bul. Well, that's really handsome. But I—

Enter Crumbs, r.

Good day, Master Crumbs. I was coming, by your order, about—

Crumbs. In good time. [*Seeing Toby.*] He here!

Toby. Don't let me interrupt business. [*Crosses,* l.] I'm going to the farm. Good by, Bullfrog; and, I say, if, in the course of auction matters, you've a lot of humanity to dispose of—

Bul. Well!

Toby. Think of Mrs. Brown, and buy it in for yourself!

[*Exit,* l. 1. e.

Crumbs. A subtle, sneering rogue, that. Harkye, Bullfrog, you must this day seize on Heywood's goods. [*Silver Jack and Hys. come down from* l. *to* c.] Strangers here!

Jack. [*Slapping Crumbs on back.*] Your servant, old sir!

Crumbs. Old sir!

Jack. Ay. There's no shame in gray hairs, is there? even though they once were a chesnut brown. [*Sarcastically.*] What then? hair will change.

Hys. Yes, and quick black eyes, with an eager look, will grow dim and dull.

Jack. A deep voice will lose something of its music:

and five feet ten shrink into [*Measuring Crumbs with his eye*] five feet seven or eight.

Hys. A large and restless mouth *may* last.

Jack. Ay, and scars—[*Seizing the hand of Crumbs, who stands amazed and trembling.*] Yes, scars will not rub out.

Crumbs. Villains! robbers! [*Passionately.*

Bul. [*Down*, c.) Robbers! shall I call the constable?

Crumbs. Peace! away! [*Is hurrying off; Jack arrests him. Crosses*, R.—*Bullfrog goes up.*

Jack. Nay, nay, old gentleman; we are strangers, and ask a day's hospitality at the mansion. [*Crosses after him.*

Crumbs. [*Endeavouring to escape.*] Away—away!

Jack. [*Holding him.*] As you will not give us house-room, will you tell me where I may find a printer?—I wish to distribute through the village some hundred copies of this little bill. [*Shows Crumbs handbill: he staggers back.*

Bul. [*Down* R. *of Crumbs.*] A printer! My cousin Hairspace is the man. Does all my catalogues. Give me the bill. [*Is about to take the bill.*

Crumbs. Touch it not; touch it not, I say! Come, gentlemen! [*Inviting them on.*

Jack. Nay, we will not trouble you. [*To Bullfrog.*] Your cousin, you say?—

Bul. The best printer forty miles about. In black, blue, or red ink, plain or ornamental,—there is no printer who—[*Endeavouring to get the bill.*

Crumbs. The devil seize thee! peace!—[*Crosses to* R. *Bullfrog goes up.*] Come, gentlemen; nay, you must with me to the mansion. We will have a brave dinner! Some wine! wine! I do entreat you not to stay, my good friends.— [*Anxiously endeavouring to lead them off.*

Jack. As you're so pressing—but we shall trouble you?

Crumbs. No, no; it gladdens me that I have met you. Come. [*Going*, R.

Bul. [*Down between Crumbs and Jack. Gives Jack a card.*] My cousin's card.

Crumbs. [*Crossing to Bull.*] What dost mutter?

Bul. Mutter! La! Mr. Crumbs! I only presented Timothy's card. Must always think of trade, you know.

Crumbs. [*In extreme passion.*] Think of trade! would'st see me hanged?

Bul. No. I never neglect business for pleasure.

[*Goes up, and comes down*, L.

Crumbs. Beware! beware! and follow me! [*To Jack and Hyssop.*] Come, gentlemen; come, my good friends! Nay, you first; I entreat. [*Exit, bowing off Jack and Hyssop, who exchange looks,* R.

Bul. Beware—beware—to a freeholder! I'll—no—I'm not yet rich enough to be in a passion. When I've made my fortune, then I may indulge in the feelings of a gentleman. [*Exit,* L.

Scene III.—*Stage a little dark. A Rustic Landscape. Evening.* Rachel *discovered,* R. 3. E., *seated on the projecting step of a stile at the side.*

Rach. The sun is almost set, and yet I see not Martin. Oh! my dear husband! my poor children! Heaven be kind to us,—for I've almost lost all other hope.—Ha! Martin! Martin!

Martin Heywood *appears at the stile:—crosses it,* R. S. E.

Mar. Rachel here!—Why did you leave the farm?

Rach. I could not stay there, and you away. Our children, Martin; they cried for you. I could not speak to them. I could not stay. Now, Martin, your friend?

Mar. [*With bitterness.*] Friend!

Rach. Oh! do not look so—do not.

Mar. I have done that to-day I never did before; I have wished myself dead! ay, dead! that I might be quit of all.

Rach. And our children, Martin?

Mar. 'Twould be better for 'em. There's some spell upon me! Do what I will, it does not thrive! Why, 'tis certain there's some curse upon me!

Rach. Be patient, dear Martin!

Mar. Patient! I have been patient. Harvest after harvest's failed;—flock after flock has died; yet I have smiled upon't, and gone whistling 'bout the fields. I have been hunted by landlord—threatened by the taxman—yet I've put a stout heart upon't and never drooped. Rachel Heywood, you see me now without a shilling—without a home—my children with not a week's food before them—my wife starving—and yet I'm patient.

Rach. I never saw you so till now. Martin, what has happened?

Mar. I may sit down, and see my little ones pine day by day; I may feel their wasting limbs, and hear them

scream for bread; and I may stare in their white faces, and tell them to be patient. Patient!

Rach. Look not so fiercely at me, Martin. Are they not my children—mine? Am I not their mother? Can your love be more than mine? But no; you did not mean that. Come, Martin, be not so hasty. What has happened?

Mar. No matter; let it rest with me. [*Crosses*, L.

Rach. But it must not, Martin. How many a time have you said that you could have no secret from Rachel?

Mar. I don't remember that.

Rach. Look there, Martin. [*Pointing to the stile.*] How often have we met at yonder stile? how often have we waited there for hours, and talked of our wedding-day, and all our hopes?—then you have said—

Mar. Ay, those were gay days! Then, life seemed full of promise, as a field of ripened corn. Those were happy times!

Rach. They will come back; never fear it. Now tell me, Martin, have you been to your friend?

Mar. I have been to Harry Wilson. The same Harry Wilson to whom my grandfather lent good guineas to begin the world.

Rach. You asked him to lend you the money for a time?

Mar. I stammered it out somehow.

Rach. And did he?

Mar. Damn him!

Rach. Oh, Martin!

Mar. I thought I was talking to a brother. I told him all, Rachel, all!—And he heard me with a smile on his face, and said he was sorry!

Rach. Then he could not assist us?

Mar. No. His money was laid out in ventures,—he had lost by lending;—but he was very sorry!

Rach. And he offered nothing?

Mar. When I told him we had not a guinea,—not a home that we could call ours,—not a certain meal,—the tears came into my eyes, and I felt like a thief whilst I said all this,—well, he wouldn't lend me a farthing; but, kind soul! he bade me take a glass of wine, and hope for better days! I took the wine, and pouring it upon the floor, wished that my blood might be so poured out of my heart, if ever again I stood beneath his roof· and so I left him!

Rach. And your other friend?

Mar. No: I asked no other. One denial was enough.

Rach. Then every hope is gone!

Mar. No; there is one hope yet. And yet I cannot bear to think of it. Rachel, our children must not starve. —What say you, shall we cross the sea?

Rach. What! leave the farm?

Mar. I am offered a place on an estate, far away in the Indies. What say you?

Rach. Leave this place?

Mar. Why not? We shall find sun, and sky, and green fields there.

Rach. But not our own fields, not our own sky,—not the friends who love us, not the neighbours who respect us. Oh! think not of it. Our children! they would die there! Die amongst strangers! Martin, would you quit our home?

Mar. Our home! where is it?—the work-house!—Ha! ha!—Our home! Rachel, it shall be. We'll not be pointed at as beggars. We'll be no burden to the parish. We'll take our children in our arms, and leave this place for ever—

Enter Toby Heywood, L.

Toby. Leave this place! what for, Martin; have you got scent of a gold mine?

Rach. Oh, speak to him—persuade him! He would go from here—go and die in some foreign place!

Toby. Nay, he has more wisdom than that. Thou'rt [*Crosses*, c.] not such a fool, Martin. Come, I'll give you better advice.

Mar. Spare it for those who ask it: I want none.

Toby. Come, don't snub your younger brother. If you did enter the world ten months and a few seconds before me, you can hear reason. Go to foreign parts, eh?

Mar. Shall I stay here and starve?

Toby. Come, Martin, we never looked sulkily at one another when we were boys; now, 'twould be too late to begin; we should make no hand of it. Starve!

Mar. Ay. Will not the steward seize?

Toby. No, no. I have been and talked to him.

Mar. You didn't beg for?—

Toby. Beg? There's little of the beggar in my face. I

talked reason to him. I said, a man who hadn't money couldn't well pay any. All you wanted was time; and he didn't refuse.

Rach. There, Martin, I told you not to be cast down. I knew we should yet be happy.

Mar. Still there is no certainty that—

Toby. I tell you what, brother; you are one of those people who are so very fond of ill-luck, that they run half-way to meet it. Old Crumbs will give you time—I know it. Go, Rachel; go to the farm. [*Rachel crosses,* L.] Wipe your eyes, kiss the babies, take down the bacon; draw a mug of nut-brown, and Martin and I will find appetites. There, away with you.

Rach. You will follow, Martin? There, look light again. That's well. We shall once more be happy—very happy! Fortune will change, be sure of it. [*Exit,* L.

Toby. Change! to be sure she will: Fortune's a woman! Hang it, Martin, do muster up a laugh. There, now,—practise that fifty times a-day, and care would as soon be hanged as dare to look at you!

[*Clapping Martin on the shoulder, gradually rouses him into cheerfulness, and exeunt,* L.

Scene IV.—*The old Oak Room in Grantley's Mansion.—The Panels elaborately carved in antique style. In one of the Panels, a Picture of a young female, richly habited.*

Enter Grantley, *shown in by* Bullfrog, *who is slightly intoxicated,* R.

Bul. Master Crumbs will be with you, sir, in the knocking down of a hammer. From London, sir?

Gran. I am. A fine old mansion this.

[*Crosses,* L., *looking at pictures on* L. F.

Bul. Beautiful! Capital piece of oak-tree paneling, that: nice bold carving, sir. [*Pointing to figures.*] Pretty cherubim's heads in the corners. That's a figure of Mercy. Should like to have the selling of the house and furniture.

Gran. The owner is indebted to your good wishes.

Bul. The owner? Oh! he's a wild fellow. He's never among us. No, sir; he's a London spark. His father left him abroad; and though the old man's been dead, and the young gentleman's been in England, these two years, he has never paid us a visit.

Gran. Fond of a town life, I suppose?

Bul. Very fond. And then he's so lucky in his steward.

Gran. Indeed!

Bul. Oh! he's a jewel of a man!—so punctual with the tenants. There's no keeping a guinea from him, sir. He's a delightful man for our business.

Gran. And your profession is—

Bul. [*Giving card.*] Appraiser and auctioneer. Happy to serve you. I made one seizure this morning; shall have another to-night. If you've thoughts of staying amongst us, and want to furnish, I can assist you to two or three good penn'orths. [*Grantley has been observing the picture on* L. F.] What, sir! you are looking at that picture? I don't know the painter. It's not a—

Gran. No— [*Musing.*

Bul. No. And it's not by—by—[*Aside*]—I must get an Italian smatter, or I shall never be able to knock down the painters!

Gran. Is it a family portrait?

Bul. Why, sir, between ourselves, if I were to put it up for auction, I should call it a conundrum in an oak frame!

Gran. Why so?

Bul. Why, more than twice, I've caught Mr. Crumbs standing before it, looking at it;—and once (you'll hardly believe it, for nobody who knows him would) I caught him with the tears rolling down his cheeks. Nobody would believe it!

Gran. Then he is not generally given to strong emotion? [*Crosses,* R.

Bul. Bless you! no, sir. He's too much a man of business for that. Here he comes. Not a word.

Enter Crumbs, D. F.—*down* C.

Crumbs. Your servant, sir. Business must excuse me, that I made you wait. [*To Bullfrog.*] Go you, and see that Burly is at hand. I seize within this hour. Go!

Bul. I will;—[*Aside.*]—but first for the other bottle with Captain Jack. I must better my taste in wines, if only in the way of trade. [*Exit,* D. F.

Gran. I shall tax your hospitality for some days. This [*Giving a letter*] from my friend, Grantley.

Crumbs. He's well, I trust? [*Aside.*] Curses on it. [*Reads.*] "*The bearer is my most special friend: treat him*

with all respect, as he were myself. He will stay to sport some week or two." I would, sir, we had had earlier notice. I fear me, you will find us ill provided.

Gran. Never fear it.

Crumbs. In truth, sir, 'tis a dull spot. Here we see no one—hear no one.

Gran. Indeed, it seems still enough.

Crumbs. You never hear a sound—not a sound; unless it be the birds in the rookery, or, at night, a mouse scratching in the wall. [*Loud laughing and knocking within. Silver Jack sings in a loud voice, behind,* D. F.:

"May corn never fail; for that makes good ale,
But a blight to all hempseed, brave boys, brave boys,
But a blight to all hempseed, brave boys."

Gran. Do the mice scratch thus early?

Crumbs. [*Confused.*] I—I— [*More laughing & noise.*

Gran. The rooks are somewhat jovial.

Crumbs. It hath never happened until now. They are the richest of the 'Squire's tenants—devout, religious men; but to-day being rent-day—

Jack & Hys., heard by the door. Holloa, Master Crumbs.

Crumbs. I come—I—[*To Grantley.*] Men of worth and reputation.

Jack. [*At door.*] Master Crumbs! John Harris! Fifty pounds reward!

Crumbs. Damnation! [*In extreme terror, rushes up, and opens folding doors. Silver Jack and Hyssop are seen, with Bull. trying to keep them back. They come down, all flushed with wine, Jack holding a bottle.*

Crumbs. [*Aside to them.*] I am busy. I will return. Go.

Jack. Busy! Damn business!

Bul. No: don't damn business. I'm very drunk, but I can't damn business; it's profane.

Jack. To leave your company, and—[*Seeing Grantley.*] Oh! a gentleman! Introduce us. You won't!—no?—I'll introduce myself. [*Crosses to Grantley, puts bottle upon the stage, which Bullfrog takes up, and retires to back; seats himself in a chair, and, during the following, drinks until he falls asleep,* L.] Servant, sir. Nice house, this. Capital wine; yes, and a civil steward. Sir, I beg your friendship. If you're for anything in this way, I— [*Taking from his pocket a pack of cards and shuffling them.*

Hys. Ay, sir; or if there be music in this— [*Rattling*

a dice box, crosses to Grantley. Crumbs endeavours to keep them back.

Gran. [*Aside.*] Devout, religious men!

Jack. We're not avaricious. We play for anything, from a marvedi to a thousand guineas.

Crumbs. [*Who has been vainly endeavoring to keep them back.*] No, no; the gentleman does not play. [*Crosses over to Grantley.*] Go in, my good friends.

Gran. [*To Crumbs.*] With your leave, I'll look about the grounds. [*Going*, R.

Jack. Fine spot—nice house—good wine—ay, and [*Looking at portrait*, L.] pretty pictures! Well, I say, [*To Hyssop,*] isn't that an angel?

Hys. I can't say: I've not been used to such company.

Gran. It is, indeed, beautiful. [*To Crumbs.*] Tell me, whose portrait is it? Did you know the lady?

Crumbs. [*With suppressed emotion.*] She was a—a favourite of the late 'Squire's. She's long since dead.

Jack. A favourite, and dead! Ha! I suppose the 'Squire was fond of her, and so broke her heart.

Crumbs. [*With passion.*] How dare you—

Jack. [*Coolly, and in an under-tone.*] Come, come, John Harris; fifty pounds reward!

Crum. [*Recovering himself—to Grantley.*] Come, sir, I will show you—

Gran. Do not quit your friends. With your leave, I'll go alone. Gentlemen, I'm the humblest of your servants. [*Aside.*] Devout, religious men! [*Exit*, R.

Hys. A pretty spoken fellow.

Jack. And a rich one. Did you see the diamonds on his fingers? I warrant me his pockets are—umph! a prize? [*To Crumbs.*] What say you?

Crum. I—I?—

Jack. I'd forgot—you only rob now as a steward. You're one of the regulars.

Crum. Rob! harkye!—

Jack. Come, come, John Harris; no big words. I've something here [*Showing bill*] wouldn't look so well framed as that red-lipped young lady. [*Pointing to picture.*

Crum. Well, well, we're friends; but be cautious, I implore you. [*In great agitation.*] Come, you shall have more wine, wine! [*Goes up and throws door open, still with his back to Bullfrog.*

Jack. [*Crosses*, R.] Wine! Ay, we will have more. And then for our plans, old boy; then for our plans. Why, how lucky it was we met one another! You see, there were a few pressing inquiries about us in London, so we thought we'd take the benefit of country air until the anxiety of our friends cooled a little. But then, to think of the luck of our meeting! Ar'nt you delighted? [*Embracing him.*

Crum. Yes, yes. But go in. You shall have wine. I'll go see to it.

Jack. Wine, wine! Ha! ha! We drink courage with wine. Success to the grapes,— [*Sings.*

"But a blight to all hempseed, brave boys, brave boys;
A blight to all hempseed, brave boys!"

[*Crumbs forces them into room in* F. *and comes down.*

Crum. The devil has forsaken me! To be tracked out after so many years! This visitor, too. No; my course is clear. But how to dispose of that ruffian? Ha! he has been prating of some woman;—by the description, 'tis Heywood's wife.—I'll put him in possession of the farm, and thus rid me of him, whilst I—let me see—

Bul. [*Still asleep.*] What shall we say for this wine, fifty years in bottle? Thank'e, sir; it's going,—going,—gone.

[*Lets the bottle fall out of his hand.*

Crum. [*Who has remained in deep thought, startled, rushes up to Bullfrog, and seizes him.*] Scoundrel! listening?

Bul. Dreaming—only dreaming. I just knocked down the sweetest ten dozen!—

Crum. Up, or I strangle you! I'st thus you mind your business?

Bul. Business!—that's enough. Cry business—and if I don't move, you may send for the undertaker.

Crum. Hence.

Bul. I'm going. Business is business. Capital wine. [*Sings.*] "And a blight to all hempseed," &c. &c.

Crum. Hence! Hence!— [*Forces him off*, R.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

Scene I.—*The Interior of Heywood's Farm. The Scene, Furniture, &c., as in Wilkie's Picture of* "Distraining

FOR RENT." MARTIN *and* RACHEL *seated at Table, with* TOBY, BEANSTALK, *his Dame, and the Children. Ale, Jugs, &c., on the Table.*

Bean. Come, Martin, here be better times.—So: we shall be jovial yet, man.

Rach. Ay, that we shall; and so I tell him, farmer; but he will not heed me.

Mar. We have had naught but ill-luck since the old man died.

Bean. Why, 'twas awfully sudden, to be sure.

Mar. Here he was, one minute, as strong and as lightsome as ever; when death fell upon him like a bolt, and he lay upon that bed, panting, like a run-down hare.

Toby. Odds, Martin! look into your ale: you'll see something better than dying men. Our grandfather's in heaven. Here's to the memory of him! Let him rest.

Mar. I tell, you, I can't but think of him. Abroad or at home, I see him. Sometimes, when I'm falling into sleep, his eyes seem to stare close at my face, and I start and gasp again; and then I see him looking and pointing at that chair. [*To Farmer.*] You know, farmer, he'd sit in it for hours, with one of the youngsters on his knee.—Still I see him, with his hand stretched forth, and his throat working, as though the words were there, but couldn't out; —and so he died. Depend on't, there was something on the old man's mind.

Toby. Brother, shall I go to the church-yard and bring you a skull and cross-bones? for in your present humour, they're your fittest company.

Mar. I'm a fool to think so. [*Fills horn.*] Come, farmer, your hand; Toby, yours; Rachel, lass, we'll be merry yet. Here's to better times! [*Drinks; then takes two of the Children on his knees.*

Toby. Come, I warrant me, there's more comfort in that than in ghost's eyes at midnight. Why, it's up in your cheek already, man. Take another.

Mar. With all my heart. And again I'll drink, "here's better times!"

Enter POLLY BRIGGS *at door,* L. S. E., *down on* R.

Pol. Oh, Farmer Heywood! Here comes the steward, and that nasty appraiser, and the beadle; and all the folks say they are coming here to seize!—

Mar. [*Putting down the Children.*] Rachel, stand aside! —that gun!— [*Is going to take the gun from over the chimney piece; Rachel prevents him.*

Rach. Oh, Martin! husband! for the love of heaven!

Toby. What would you, Martin?

Mar. Shoot the first man who crosses yonder threshold.

Bean. Come, come, Martin, be not rash: thee's no reason to be so.

Mar. No reason! You have a wife and children, yet say I have no reason!—Are not here five—[*Pointing to Rach. & Chil.*]—five bitter reasons? The gun! [*Violently.*

Toby. Martin, Martin, are you mad?

Mar. [*Falling despairingly into a chair.*] I am mad. God help me!—I am mad!

Enter Crumbs *at door—crosses over behind to* L.

Crum. This is a disagreeable business.

Toby. I should know that by your looking so pleased.

Crum. I want my due.

Toby. You'll have it some day. I wish the law allowed me to give it you now.

Bean. Come, come, Master Crumbs, have compassion.

Toby. Compassion!—tell him to have three heads.

Rach. Do not anger him. [*To Crumbs.*] Good sir, give us time: but a short time: have mercy.—Kneel, children, kneel! [*Children are about to kneel, when Martin starts up.*

Mar. Stand! if you're of my blood. They are the children of an honest man, and must not kneel before a villain!

Crum. Mighty well. You owe a twelvemonth's rent; and instead of money, you give blustering words. Rent-day passes lightly with you.

Mar. Lightly! [*To Beanstalk.*] Farmer, as I am a man, I have lived a whole year in torment. Day has been all misery to me, and bed no bed. Still, as rent-day would come, I have lain awake whole nights, and every night was more dreadful than the past. Then I've tried to think no more, but dug my head into my pillow, and fixed my fingers tightly in my hair, and tried to stun myself to sleep;—but all would not do.—There appeared a something hanging over me—about me; heavy and stifling it seemed,—and my blood would run hot and cold; and so I've lain and watched, and prayed the daylight in. The next night worse; for it brought the time still nearer. And when at

last the rent-day came, and I without one groat, I've crossed yon door, not with an English farmer's tread, but with a thief's pace, crawling to the gallows!—This is to pass rent-day lightly!

Crum. Why not give up the farm? Why not leave the house?

Mar. Why not? My father's father grew gray under this roof. And sooner should these beams fall and knock my brains out, than I would quit them. Here I was born, and here I will die. If you would take me through yon door, Master Crumbs, I tell you it must be heels foremost. Leave the house! I almost love it like a living thing.

Crum. All very fine. For my part, I can't see why one house shouldn't be as good as another.

Mar. Likely you cannot. But I have crawled a little child upon this floor: the very door-step is worn with my feet. I have seen my mother, fathers, die here!—I—I tell you, here I first saw the light, and here I'll close my eyes.

Rach. Dear Martin, be calm.

Crum. You'll not oppose the law?

Mar. I know not that. I tell you, don't provoke me. [*Taking the arm-chair.*] Here I sit in my grandfather's chair: the chair of that old man, who, for forty years, paid rent and tithe to the last guinea. Here I sit! And I warn you, put not a hand upon a stick or thread!

Crum. [*Crosses behind, calling at door.*] Come in, friends.

Enter Bullfrog, *over on* L., *and* Burly *at door,* R. S. E.

Mar. I warn you back.

Burly. [*Showing a paper.*] What say you to our warrant, Master Heywood?

Mar. I tell you not to tempt me. I cannot trust myself, for I am desperate! Leave the farm!

Crum. [*To Bull. & Bur.*] You know your duties. [*Exit* L.

Bul. [*On* L., *who has been looking over goods.*] Business is business. [*Takes out pen, ink, and book.*] One bedstead!

Mar. Let me come at them!

Toby. Nay, nay, brother!

Rach. Husband!

Children. Father! [*They all hang about Martin, keeping him from attacking Burly and Bullfrog.*]

Mar. (C.) [*After a struggle, sinks into the chair.*] Rachel!—my poor babes!—take all, take all.

Bul. [*Making out inventory.*] One bedstead—one table! *Bean. and Neighbours* [*who have entered,* R., *and come down, some remaining behind*]. Shame! Shame!

Toby. Blood-suckers!

Bul. One toasting-fork, one bird-cage, one baby's rattle!

Mar. God help us! God help us! [*Buries his face in his hands. Bullfrog seats himself on bed; and other characters so arrange themselves-as to represent Wilkie's Picture of* "Distraining for Rent."

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

Scene I.—*The Interior of Heywood's Farm. Day breaking. The Furniture of the Scene as at the conclusion of the first Act.* Polly Briggs *discovered, seated at table,—a light burning.*

Pol. Dear me! how heavily the time goes,—and the farm,—I declare, it doesn't look as it used to do. I'm so tired—yet I must keep my eyes open, for company's sake.

Enter Rachel, R.

Rach. They sleep soundly. Poor children! Heaven knows where they will rest another night. I stood and watched them; and they looked so innocent—so happy—they smiled, and my heart died within me.

Pol. Don't take on so. Martin will return with good news, never fear.

Rach. I'm so wretched, I have lost even hope.—My pretty babes, had we been always beggars, then you could have borne cold, nipping winds, rough words, uncertain food; —but now they'll pine, and so they'll die. Even our children will be taken from us.

Pol. Well, I never thought you could talk after this fashion.

Rach. Nor I. But then I had not seen my infants lying on a bed no longer theirs.—Is it not almost day-break? Had Martin been successful, he would surely have been back.

Pol. Now, why will you think the worst? I shouldn't wonder if he returned with a large bag of money. I'll go to the end of the lane, and see if either he or Toby be coming.

Rach. No, do not leave me—the stranger up stairs—Yet go; but do not stay. [*Exit Polly at door*, R. S. E.] Sure the morning will never come. Oh, yes, 'twill come too soon! Then another, and another, and we are houseless beggars. I walk about the place like a restless ghost.—To know the worst were better than to remain thus. [*Sits.*] I am worn and tired—even too tired to sleep. [*Fatigued, falls asleep.*

Enter Silver Jack, *cautiously*, R.

Jack. All quiet. Harris must have put some devil in that wine, or I had never slept so. Here am I in possession,—a watch-dog over spoons and platters, whilst Hyssop, I warrant me, is rarely plucking that new-comer. Jack, Jack, so it has ever run; a pair of bright eyes has been a will-o'-the-wisp to you, leading you through quagmires all your life.—Ha! [*Seeing Rachel,*] she's here, and sleeping! How tired, pale, yet pretty, she seems! She looks good, and—pshaw! we all look good asleep. How still the place is; no one here but ourselves:—yes, the children. I just passed through their room, and saw them looking as fresh and as rosy—I felt as I hadn't felt for many a day.—'Twas a fool's moment, and is gone,—

[*Approaching her, she wakes.*

Rach. Martin, Martin! [*Sees Jack.*] You here!

Jack. I couldn't well sleep, so I thought I'd come down and keep you company. This is a much pleasanter room.

Rach. It is at your service. I can go to my children's.

[*Going.*

Jack. [*Staying her.*] They're all fast asleep. Bless their little hearts! I stood and looked at them just now till I quite loved them. They are very handsome.

Rach. And most unfortunate.

Jack. Why, this is an awkward business. But you may yet find friends.

Rach. Friendship!

Jack. We sometimes find it where we had least thoughts of it. Your children are very like you.

Rach. It has been remarked. [*Going.*

Jack. [*Lingering.*] Yes, full purses ought to go with full hearts.

Rach. 'Twould save much misery. I would your employer—

Jack. My employer! Why, to be sure, old Crumbs was once my master: but times are changed; we are now bosom friends. I am here only to oblige him.

Rach. Your task can hardly be a pleasant one.

Jack. Nay, 'tis very pleasant. Look you, I have been rolling these many years about the world, and this [*Displaying a purse*] has still been gathering. Those pretty babes of yours,—I'm mightily taken with them. Where is your husband?

Rach. Gone, as a last hope, to try to borrow. He should have been back by this.

Jack. I never found this purse so troublesome before. Will you lighten it for me? Come, no ceremony. You want money: I don't.

Rach. Oh! this is kind, most kind. Yet, from a stranger—

Jack. Pshaw! Ill-fortune, now and then, makes sudden acquaintances. [*Still presses the money.*

Rach. Indeed, sir, I—I cannot.

Jack. Yet the poor babes must sleep somewhere to-morrow. Come!

Rach. My husband will speedily be here; he, perhaps—

Jack. Nay, when I'm in the humour, I wouldn't be balked. Now or never! Hang it! take the purse.—

[*Forces it into her hand.*

Rach. My husband will return it with a thousand thanks. My children are saved. Oh! you have made us most happy!

Jack. That's enough for me. As for returning the money, that may rest with yourself. 'Twould have been hard for you to see your husband in a jail; yourself and little ones without a home.

Rach. Only to hear you name it makes me tremble.

Jack. But there's no such hard fortune for you. No, you may stay in your farm, have your children about you, whilst all fears of beggary and the workhouse—why, you seem ill?

Rach. The sudden joy—'tis nothing, and will pass.

Jack. Come, sit down—[*She sits.*]—There, you are looking better whilst I speak. [*Hanging over the chair.*] As for the money, if you like to have it as a gift, 'tis a bargain between us. So, to make it binding, just one kiss!—[*Throws his arms about her: she shrinks from him.*] Why do you look so at me?

Rach. I was deceived! I thought I saw a friend: I was deceived! [*Rises.*

Jack. Tush! I am your friend. Come, one kiss.

Rach. There [*Drops the purse at his feet*] is your money. [*Going.*

Jack. Will you be blind to your own good? I tell you, the money shall be yours—all yours.—I care not for a penny of it.

Rach. Be silent, and let me go. [*Endeavours to pass.*

Jack. Think of your children—your husband— [*Seizes her.*

Rach. I do, and scorn you. [*Breaks away from him.*

Jack. Are you mad?—listen to my offer.

Rach. Had you made it when the world went well with us—when this roof sheltered a happy family—when every day brought its plenty, its content—when we had no fear of poverty or persecution—even then, the thought of that you propose, should have brought the blushes to your face, and made you dumb with shame;—but now,—with want at our hearth—a husband mad with sorrow—children unprotected—now to offer!—oh! you have a heart of stone, or you could ne'er have thought it.

Jack. Hear reason, and take the purse. I tell you, I do not mean——

Rach. You mean the worst. He who would destroy a happy fireside, is vile and infamous; but he who insults its wretchedness, is base indeed.

Jack. Base! Look you!—zounds! to be whipped by a woman's tongue! Come, don't let us part so. This is all very well, but, but,—hang it, can't we understand one another.

Rach. Oh! Martin! Martin!

Jack. [*Chinking the purse.*] He may sleep in a prison tomorrow!

Rach. Let me pass. I must, will go to my children.

Jack. [*Throwing up the purse.*] And they may want a breakfast.

Rach. Villain! though you insult the wife, have pity on the mother. [*Attempting to cross, he seizes her.*] Let me go!

Jack. Not now—I have gone too far.

Rach. Oh! you will not! Mercy! Martin! [*Despairingly.*] He comes not!

Jack. [*Passionately.*] You may rave. You've roused me, and I'll not be trifled with.

Rach. Help! help! [*They struggle.*] My husband!—he is here!— [*Crosses,* R. *Jack, surprised, lets her go, and falls back. She rushes to the door, and seizes a wood-cutter's bill that is lying on some wood near the wall.*

Jack. Tricked!

Rach. You see, a sound will make a coward of the wicked. Do not come near me; pray, do not. This, though you die, shall protect me.

Jack. Well, well, I own I've been wrong—I ask pardon. Come back. Put your trust—

Rach. In this! [*Lifting the bill.*] I say again, stir not! Stay beneath this roof! Stay in the poor man's house you would have outraged! Stay,—blush,—and beg to be forgiven! [*Exit,* R. S. E.

Jack. Gone! what devil is it that cows me? Ha! [*Looking out.*] She flies down the lane. That copse!—yes, though I ran to the gallows, I would follow her.

[*Exit,* R. S. E.

Bul. [*Putting his head from between the bed-curtains.*] Run to the gallows!—you needn't hurry yourself; the gallows will wait for you. Well, this I call an adventure! Now, if this cause come to trial, I'm witness ready for either side. As I'm a sworn appraiser, it's almost day-light!—why, I must have been asleep these seven or eight hours, and nobody knew it. This all comes of the steward's wine. Eh? I hear a footstep. I must sleep and listen.

[*Disappears.*

Enter POLLY, R. S. E.

Pol. Why, Rachel! Oh! gone up stairs, I suppose, to cry over the poor little things! Well, I've no good news for her. I went all down the lane, and came back over the fields, and saw no signs of Martin or Toby either. If these are the troubles that are to come upon the married, I am sure a poor girl is better single. There's nothing

but vexation in this world!—and, dear me, I'm so sleepy! —I haven't had a single wink all night, and it's a shame, too; for there stood the bed, so inviting, as though it said, do come and lie down! There'll be no harm in sitting upon it. [*Sits upon the bed.*] How I should like to lie down!

Bul. [*Putting his head through the curtains.*] Well, there's plenty of room for two!

Pol. [*Screaming and running into corner*, R.] Thieves! Murder!—

TOBY *appears at the door*, R. S. E.

Toby. Polly!—Bullfrog!

Pol. Oh! the wretch!

Toby. [*Seizing him.*] What's this?—speak!

Bul. How can I, with your fingers in my windpipe

Toby. [*Drags him out of bed.*] Answer me: what is all this?

Pol. Yes, explain, Mr. Bullfrog.

Bul. [*Half aside to Polly.*] Don't be a fool, and nobody will be the wiser.

Pol. The wiser, sir?—the wiser!

Toby. Speak, I say!

Bul. [*Aside.*] Now I'll talk nettles to him. Well, Mr. Heywood; the fact is, I—I am but a man.

Toby. Why, no; I never took you for an angel.

Bul. Perhaps not, Mr. Heywood; but the fair sex— [*Winking to Pol.*]—the fair sex can discover modest merit.

Pol. Now, as I'm alive, I was here alone,—and never knowing that that wretch—

Bul. Fie! wretch? What, *now!* call me wretch now?

Pol. That monster!—

Bul. Come, no scandal. If you will tell the truth, I can't help it; but no scandal.

Pol. That—that—

Bul. There, don't press her: you see her feelings—

Toby. Master Bullfrog, you've had a marvellous escape.

Bul. How?

Toby. In not lighting on as great a fool as yourself: else, my life on't, your head had been broken.

Bul. A fool! And have you the audacity to call me a fool?

Toby. And not all fool: for the rogue is so equally mixed, that there is no saying where either begins or ends.

Bul. Fool! rogue!—The law will tell you this is slander.

Toby. I know it: I'm speaking the truth.

Bul. And the law shall mend my character.

Toby. The character that needs law to mend it, is hardly worth the tinkering. In one word, how came you here?

Pol. That's right. Make him tell you.

Bul. Tell? well, you're a courageous woman! What, then, [*To Toby,*] you've no suspicion?—there's no making you unhappy?

Toby. No.

Bul. Mrs. Heywood will be a fortunate woman.

Toby. What put you into that bed?

Pol. Yes, what put you into that bed?

Bul. If you must know,—this. [*Producing a bottle from his pocket.*] This put me to bed: it's done as much for many a man.

Toby. What do you mean?

Bul. Mean?—Didn't I attend here as sworn appraiser, and didn't I make the inventory? Yes. [*Producing it.*] Here it is: "One cradle, one toasting-fork,"—all right; move a stick, and I'll indict you! Well, there was a great noise in the family; one running one way—one another,—children crying—women fainting, a smell of burnt feathers; and your brother, swearing enough to shock any Christian who knows what virtue is, and pays his way. I had brought a little wine from the mansion, and all of a sudden, I found myself quite alone here, so I sat down upon the bed, and drank and drank. Then I got on the bed, then between the blankets, pulled-to the curtains, looked at my inventory —(some of the things will sell well)—said my prayers,—droned a hymn, and went to sleep! Then—no, I pass over the rest—when you came in, you—but I musn't go any further.

Toby. Yes, you must.

Bul. I tell you, I can't.

Toby. I tell you, you must—you must go over that door-step. If you remain here two minutes longer, 'twill not be on your legs, I promise you. [*Menacing him.*

Bul. I give you warning! Remember, I'm a sworn appraiser.

Toby. You 're better able to judge for what you ought to be knocked down.—Come, pack! [*Bull. crosses to* R.

Bul. I'm going. But only threaten me, and I'll call down the man from up stairs—he who's in possession—[*Aside.*] They musn't know he's gone, or they'll block up the premises.

Toby. [*Still threatening him.*] I've given you fair words

Bul. Keep to 'em: you can't do better. Ha! drop your arm, or I'll call for the man. If you put me in bodily fear, it's no fault of mine!—Now, Mr. Toby!—here! my good man—[*Shrinking from Toby, and feigning to call down Silver Jack.*] My good man!

Toby. Will you go?

Bul. I will, [*Aside*] to give Crumbs notice. Ha! I'll call!—I tell you, I'll call. As for that young woman, if you demand any satisfaction?—oh! you don't? well, it's very prudent of you.—Don't stir a step, or down he comes. And now—now [*Aside*] to put another man in. [*Gets to the door, stops, and calls, as to man up-stairs.*] My good man, see that they don't move a stick! [*Toby runs to door, and Bul. makes his escape.*

Pol. If you'll believe me, my dear Toby, I never dreamt that that wretch—that villain—that——

Toby. I'm sure you must be intimate with him, by the correctness of your description. Let the fool go. Where's Rachel?

Pol. With the children. Have you seen nothing of Martin?

Toby. No. For once, I fear the worst. But my mind's made up. I'll go to London.

Pol. Mercy save us! to London!

Toby. To London; though I walk every inch of the way, and live upon blackberries. I'll see the young 'Squire himself.

Pol. But why go,—why not write?

Toby. No. A letter's but a scribbled bit of paper, to be tossed aside, and there's an end. No! he shall look in my face, and hear me talk; and if I don't bring the blood into his cheek, why, there's not a blush to be had from all London.

Pol. Don't be rash. Do but consider who the 'Squire is, and who you are.

Toby That's what I intend to let him know. I shall tell him, if landlords are too proud or too idle to look after the

comforts of their tenants, and to live upon their own lands, why, 'tis a great pity that Providence should have intrusted them with any. What! haven't we paid truly for sixty years? and now that a rascal should screw, and grind, and crush us. No! 'tis a good thought, for it's come so late.—I'll go to London.

Pol. Martin may yet bring good news.

Toby. He may; but I'll provide against the worst. You go to Rachel. I'll be hence soon. [*Exit Polly*, R.] My luggage won't stop my speed upon the road. Yes, and now I have it: I'll once more to the mansion; and if old Crumbs be as deaf as ever, I'll see if the 'Squire himself be not less hard of hearing than his servant. [*Exit*, R. S. E.

Scene II.—*A Copse.*

Enter Rachel, *in flight*, R.

Rach. I hear his step. Yes, there again. 'Tis he. Could I but gain the main road;—I cannot stir. I am almost dead with grief and fear. [*Hides.*

Enter Silver Jack, *in pursuit*, R.

Jack. This was the place. I'm sure 'twas here.

Enter Hyssop, *hastily*, L.

Hys. Jack, is't you?

Jack. Ay: did you pass a woman in fast flight?

Hys. A woman! Will you never be serious? Come with me.

Jack. Stop till I have found my runaway.

Hys. And lost a golden prize. I was coming for you.

Jack. A prize!—What do you mean?

Hys. That visitor at the mansion! Why, he has heaps of guineas, rings, and a brilliant snuff-box, that alone would make us.

Jack. Well?

Hys. Well?—If you're the Silver Jack of yesterday, they must be ours.

Jack. How?

Hys. Easily. He is now in bed. I have left open all the doors.—[*Rachel shows herself through the trees, listening.*] We can get into his chamber, and then——

Jack. But if he wake and resist?

Hys. A knife!

Jack. The booty is large?

Hys. I tell you, enough to set us up.

Jack. Where the devil can that woman have flown?

Hys. A woman!—It's a pity women aren't thief-catchers, for they'd only have to show you the darbies, and you'd run your hands into 'em. Will you join me, or shall I do the work alone?

Jack. I'm for you. But you're too much of a philosopher; you should consider one's little frailties. [*Taking out small pocket-pistols, and looking at the priming, &c.*] Man was born to love, and that's my weakness. If he stir, here are two bullets for his head! The doors are open, you say?

Hys. Every one.—[*Rachel expresses her resolution to give their victim notice, and glides off,* L.] And now for the shiners. [*Exeunt,* L.

Enter MARTIN HEYWOOD, R.

Mar. Poor Rachel!—I hadn't the heart to go to the farm. For her—for my children's sake, I'll once more try to move the steward. It almost chokes me to think of it; but it must be tried. Every one refuses me: 'tis my last hope. If that fail, too, 'tis needless to whimper about it,—good by, farm!—good by, England! I have promised to give my answer to-day: and it may be to-night we sleep upon the sea. Now for Master Crumbs, to beg, and pray, and be refused. He is an early riser, and I may now see him without fear of interruption. If he denies me, why, then, for a foreign home, for I have lost my own. [*Exit,* L.

SCENE III.—*An old Gallery in the Mansion. Door in* F., *leading into Apartment.*

Enter HYSSOP *and* JACK, L. RACHEL *glides in and retires at back,* L. S. E.

Hys. You see all the doors were open.

Jack. Yes; it's what I call house-breaking made easy. No one stirring, either.—Where's Crumbs?

Hys. Vanished in a blue flame, for what I know. I hope he means no mischief; but I've scarcely seen him since he went with you to the farm. Should he blow on us now!——

Jack. He dares not; 'twould cost him his neck.

Hys. Yet we'll not trust him. We'll do this piece of work on our own behalf. Then—for I've left nothing unprovided—there are a couple of horses, ready saddled, in the stable; we'll spare not the spur: and once off, let the steward settle the account as best he may.

Jack. Where does the spark sleep?

Hys. In yonder chamber. I have secured the key. The bird is nicely caged. Come!—[*Goes to the door,* F., *and opens it, leaving the key in. Jack pulls him back.*

Jack. Stay, Frank. I've been thinking of it:—there must be no blood in this.

Hys. That's at the option of the gentleman. I've no objection, if it can be made comfortable to him.

Jack. 'Twould make a stir that might be fatal to us. You must promise me.

Hys. As far as I can keep my temper, I do. Now, then; for there's no time to lose. [*At this moment Rachel, who has secured the key, glides into the room,* R. *in* F. *She is seen by Hyssop, who staggers back.*] Ha! trapped!

Jack. [*Clapping his hand to his pistols.*] What do you mean?

Hys. A woman entered that room!

Jack. You dream!

[*Rushes to the door, and looks through the key-hole.*

Hys. [*Listening.*] There! I hear her footstep.

Jack. Why, no! yes;—it is the farmer's wife!

Hys. And there! [*Rach. is heard to turn the key in the lock,* R. D. F.] She locks the door.—We're rarely gulled. Now there's but one plan. We'll force the way.

Jack. [*Stopping him, and pointing off with astonishment.*] Her husband! [*They retire up,* R. S. E.

Enter Martin, R.

Mar. All the doors open, yet not a soul about! [*Sees them.*] Is the steward?—Surely, [*Recognizing Jack,*] 'tis he who was put into the farm. [*Aside.*

Jack. [*To Hys.*] Peace! I have it.—You wanted the steward?

Mar. Yes. Did he not put you into my house?

Jack. Ay; but I've finished my errand there: 'twas not the pleasantest.

Mar. I come to beg for time. Had I any one to intercede for me——

Jack. You may be quite easy. You have a friend, depend on't.

Mar. I know not where.

Jack. [*Pointing to room.*] There! In that room is a young London spark, the Squire's acquaintance—the door locked, and with him,—yes, you'll keep the farm:—'twas he who sent me to your house.

Mar. He! for what?

Jack. You've a pretty wife, he has plenty of money—I delivered my message, and there your wife is.

Mar. My wife! villain! [*Seizes him.*] Unsay the slander—on your knees unsay it—or, were you the father of all lies, I would not quit you.

Jack. Leave your hold! I say your wife.

Mar. My Rachel! [*Bewildered.*] Why, how you look at me?

Jack. Knock at the door, perhaps she'll answer.

Mar. I am a wretched, ruined man; but do not play with me. Grief has worn me, but revenge will make me strong. If this be a lie!——

Jack. Knock at the door.

Mar. There seems blood before my eyes; and I feel of a sudden weak and old.

Jack. Knock at the door.

Mar. I'll tear his life out! [*Crosses,* R.

Hys. Why, that's manful. Here's that will help you.

[*Cocks a pistol and forces it into his hand.*

Mar. [*Rushes to the door.*] Come out, I say!

Enter Grantley, *armed with a brace of pistols,* R.D.F., Rachel *following him.*

Gran. [*Speaking as he enters.*] Villains! I am armed!

Mar. Die!

Rach. [*Screams and runs before Grantley.*] Martin! what would you?

Mar. What! you cling to him,—before my eyes?—Rachel Heywood, I forgive that man! [*Drops the pistols—Jack and Hyssop glide off.*] Let him but send a bullet

through the heart you've broken, and I will thank him with my last breath.

Gran. This your husband,—and leagued with the robbers?

Rach. No, no; he knows not what he says. Grief has distracted him.

Mar. Yes, grief. Falsehood, where I had hoped for truth. Scorn, where I had looked for love. Shame, where I had built my greatest pride.

Gran. Go, I pardon you—I spare you.

Mar. Pardon! Spare! I have at home four motherless children;—what! do you spare me them? Will you leave the poor man one miserable comfort?

Rach. Husband!

Mar. Can your lips yet say that word?—Heaven forgive you!—can you yet speak it? Let it be for the last time! Never let us look again upon each other's face. [*She clings to him.*] Away! [*Casts her off.*] My heart sinks at your touch! I leave you; and may God pardon and protect you. [*Rushes off*, L.

Rach. Martin! Martin! Oh! he is lost with misery!

Gran. Fear not: for your sake I will not accuse him.

Rach. Accuse!

Gran. Nay, I perceive and value your motives. You would not suffer your husband to become a criminal. You preserved, it may be, my life. I thank you, and pardon him.

Rach. And was it for this I saved you?—for this have endured the bitterest words that wife can listen to?—for this have made him mad? Sir, I never saw you till this hour. I never heard of you till named by villains who would have destroyed you. Then I flew to give you warning—I saved you;—and you give me this reward,—suspicion of my husband.

Gran. Your eloquence, my good woman, does not deceive me. The other villains shall be pursued. For your husband, trust me, he is safe. [*Exit*, L.

Rach. 'Tis no matter.—I will go home. Home! did he not forbid me?—Oh! he knew not what he said. And yet he found me—Oh! that he should harbour such a thought! I will fly and explain all; for now I should go mad to live one moment from him. [*Exit*, L.

Enter Crumbs, r.

Crumbs. All is stored—all packed!—all the harvest of my thrift and enmity. Ye cursed walls, I leave ye to your owner,—to him who I had vainly hoped to beggar—to sink into the dust, a wretched, undone spendthrift!—May ye become the haunt of gamesters,—of hungry, smooth-faced knaves, who flatter and devour! May ye be staked upon a card, and pass from him who stakes ye! For ten years have I dwelt here, nursing my revenge. For ten years has vengeance been to me as a food—a nourishment. I have lived and gloated on it. May others finish the ruin I've begun! Now I must leave, ere my visitor—plagues light upon him!—be stirring. That villain, Jack, is still at Heywood's farm, his companion yet asleep. I live within the gallows' foot whilst near them. I have hid my treasure in the laurel hedge.—I've bought the captain of the vessel, and this night I leave the shore. I walk 'mongst pitfalls whilst I tread it.

Bullfrog *runs in*, l.

Bul. Oh! Master Crumbs! such an affair.

Crum. Peace, ye roaring fool! [*Going.*

Bul. Fool! Early as it is, you're the second man who has called me fool this morning. I come upon business.

Crum. To-night—to-morrow!

Bul. Not my maxim. Shut your door upon business, and business will soon forget to knock at it. Your friend, Captain Jack,——

Crum. What of him?

Bul. He might be a good hand to put in possession if one were to distrain a nunnery; but where a quick eye is to be kept on chairs and tables, he's as blind as Cupid.

Crum. What jargon is this?

Bul. I only hope there'll not be an action; but, if there should be,——

Crum. Speak out, or I'll throttle you. [*Grasping him.*

Bul. There certainly is a conspiracy to call me a fool and choke me. Don't stare at me in that manner: it isn't business-like.

Crum. Speak, or begone.

Bul. Well, then, it's a serious truth that the Heywoods

might clear out the farm; for nobody is there to prevent them.

Crum. Is that all!

Bul. All? what! where I have once seized? what's to become of my reputation? I employ nobody but respectable, steady men. The fact is, Captain Jack was above his calling; for he made love to the farmer's wife.

Crum. Well?

Bul. Not well, Mr. Crumbs. When a man's on business, he should be above such trifles.

Crum. Where is he now?

Bul. Run off—left the premises in the most scandalous manner. I shouldn't wonder if he comes here.

Crum. [*Aside.*] I must begone.

Bul. You are not going? I must put another man in, you know? I say, I must——

Crum. Leave me.

Bul. Business! Who shall I put in? [*Follows him.*

Crum. [*Furiously.*] Any one—no one—the devil!

[*Rushes off,* R.

Bul. I'll have nothing more to do with any of your acquaintance. Why, he's quite in a fury. I see it: I know he dabbles—stocks must have fallen. Nothing else could put a man in such a passion. [*Exit,* L., *and returns.*] Here comes Stephen. Perhaps he may know the cause why old Crumbs is in such a fury.—Stephen! Stephen!

Enter STEPHEN, R.—*crosses,* L.

Ste. I can't stop now—the whole place is in an uproar!

Bul. Well, they've kept it very quiet. What's the matter?

Ste. There's been robbery, and nearly——

Bul. Robbery?

Ste. Yes, and nearly murder.

Bul. Murder's very bad, but I hope there's no property lost?

Ste. We don't know what's lost yet. But for the two chaps you drank with and were such friends, the gentleman offers a reward for whoever seizes them.

Bul. A reward!—I'll put on my cricketing pumps, and run directly. Are they thieves, think you?

Ste. You've been more in their company than I have.

There's Toby Heywood in the garden. Go and talk to him. Business, you know,——

Bul. Business!—right. Toby here! then I'll just run and put Nokes into the farm, and then after my friends. I say, what's happened to Master Crumbs?

Ste. Why, between you and me, the steward—but while I talk to you I may miss what the gentleman offers.

[*Runs off*, L.

Bul. Something wrong with the steward. If he should go out, I might come in. I'll run and show my activity.

[*Runs off*, R.

SCENE IV.—*The Interior of Heywood's Farm.*

MARTIN *discovered, seated in his Arm-Chair. His children grouped about him.*

Mar. And this, then, is the end! All's gone!—I cannot carry with me even a hope of better days. Now, indeed, labour will be hard to me; for I shall work with a broken heart. Now, fortune cannot bless me; for she with whom I should have shared all good—But let me think no more of her. Think no more! Like a ghost she seems to haunt me. But she has shamed me—and may she——! No, I cannot curse her, with her children looking in my face. I will not curse her. I must say farewell to the home where I was born—where I had hoped to die.—Oh! as I think of the long past days,—as I sit here staring my last at these walls, those who are now in their graves come gathering about me;—faces that seem a part of the place—that seem as they had never been away;—looks that take me back, and make me a child again.—All from then till now is like a dream; the things of my boyhood alone seem real:—all else is—

Rach. [*Without*, R. S. E.] Martin! Martin!

Mar. [*Starting.*] No, no; that is real—would it were not! [*To Children.*] Go, bolt the door.

Boy. Why, it is my mother. I musn't bolt the door against my mother.

Mar. No.—I had forgot. A good child; you must not.

[*Boy runs and opens the door*, R. S. E.

Rach. [*Running in.*] Martin! dear Martin!

Mar. [*Rises.*] Rachel, if you can look in my face, and

do not sink with shame, can you look on these?

[*Pointing to Children.*

Rach. Shame!—You are deceived.

Mar. I have been: so deceived, that had a voice from the sky called you what it tears my heart to think of, I would not have listened to it. But, these eyes—these eyes—oh! that I had been blind!

Rach. You never loved me if you will not hear me.

Mar. Never loved you! It was that love that smoothed all trouble to me. It was that love, that, when all men,—fortune,—seemed set against me, cheered me on, and put a strength into my heart,—that made me smile as I would think—well, let all go, let all else fail me, there's one who'll never change;—there is one who is as good, as constant as the angels. Poverty came upon me: the blow was sudden and unkind. Still I thought, though we have but a crust, we'll share that crust together: though our bed be straw, that bed shall bear us both!—As you say, I am deceived.

Rach. But hear me, Martin; then judge me as you will.

Mar. That man—that devil whom they put here—would his blood were on my hearth!—did he not tempt you?

Rach. He did.——

Mar. With gold—filthy gold?—He came into the poor man's house—bought that which I thought worlds could never buy—robbed me of my wife, these children of their mother.

Rach. Martin, may you be pardoned that thought!—It is true, that man showed me gold—dared to speak—to seize me,—but I cast his money in the dust, I tore myself from his arms.——

Mar. His arms! [*Passionately.*] Woman! I would not kill you.

Rach. I fled and hid myself—listened to a plan of murder, and ran to the mansion.

Mar. I found you there, coming from his chamber.

Rach. I knew not the man! 'Twas to save his life. Upon my soul, I speak the truth!

Mar. [*With emotion.*] A lie—a foul lie!

Rach. The truth, or may I die at your feet. Oh, Martin! can you think thus of me,—after the years—the happy years?—or am I become tiresome to you, and so with this excuse you'd——

Mar. Excuse! Are these tears an excuse,—these trembling limbs, these scalded eyes, this broken heart?

[*Sinks into a chair.*

Enter Sailor, r. s. e.

Sailor. [*Speaking at door.*] Now, Master, if you're for starting, we shall sail in an hour. Here's a whole crew of neighbours, too, coming to take leave of you.

[*Disappears.*

Rach. Martin?

Mar. I have accepted the place abroad, to attend an estate, [*With suppressed disgust,*] and overlook the slaves. I leave the farm—the country, this day.

Rach. The children?

Mar. They go with me.

Rach. And I, Martin—I?

Mar. Go where you will, may you be happy.

Rach. [*Wildly.*] My children! Use me as you please,—but my babes!—Oh, Martin! what madness is upon you? [*Martin crosses to* r., *and takes one of the children by the hand.*] Hear me!—you shall hear me! If it must be so, think not of me as your wife; but have mercy on the mother of your children!

Mar. I love them, Rachel.

Rach. Dearly, very dearly; but not like a mother.

Mar. Bid them farewell, for they must go.

Rach. But not without me! Children, pray to your father—pray to him I must not call my husband?

[*Kneeling to Martin.*

Mar. Rachel, this is wild and useless. Be calm, and give them up.

Rach. I tell you, I shall go mad—raving mad—to lose my children! Take me with them. I do not ask you to speak to me, to look at me;—let me work with the slaves you speak of;—let me die, so as I die not from my children! [*Faints, and falls over Martin's knee—the Children surround her.*

Enter Farmer Beanstalk, Polly, Dame, Neighbours, *and* Sailor, r. s. e.

Bean. Why, Martin, and bee'st thee really going? [*Sees Rachel.*] Why, what's the matter with thee wife?

Pol. Bless me, Rachel! [*They bear her to the back.*

Mar. Farmer, farewell; neighbours, heaven bless you! —let the landlord take all the rest,—this chair,—my grandfather's chair,—I'll bear with me.

Enter Bullfrog *and* Burly *at door*, R. S. E., *down on* E.

Bul. Not a splinter of it, as I'm a sworn appraiser.

Mar. I do not wish to hurt you, man; but do not strive to prevent me.

Bul. Mustn't move a stick, Mr. Heywood. Business is business.

Mar. I tell you, this chair shall go with me. Let him who dares, lay a finger on it.

[*Is about to lift the chair. Bullfrog advances.*

Bul. Business is business. I seize in the king's name.

Mar. Then you must fight for it.

[*Strikes Bull., who seizes the chair with Burly. Neighbors assist Martin, exclaiming,* "Down with them!" *In the struggle, the back of the chair is pulled off, when out falls loose gold, money-bags, and a paper.*

All. Gold! Money!

Bul. I seize it in the king's name.

Far. [*Throwing him aside.*] What be this? [*Taking up paper.*] Your grandfather's name. [*Bullfrog is going to seize the will. Martin rushes across and keeps him back.*

Mar. Read, read!

Far. [*Reads.*] "Should any sudden accident light upon me, so that I be not able to tell my last wishes, let this certify, that the three hundred guineas hidden, with this paper, in my walnut chair, be the rightful property of Martin and Tobias Heywood, my grandsons. Signed,

Thomas Heywood.

Mar. I shall keep the farm!—ha! ha!—I shall keep the farm! [*Sinks upon the neck of Farmer. Neighbors shout.*

Enter Grantley *at door*, R. S. E.

Gran. Where is Master Heywood?

Mar. Come not here, man—come not here!

Gran. Be calm. I have injured you—in thought, I mean. All your neighbours praise you for an honest, upright man. I thought you the companion of scoundrels. But for your

wife, whose devotedness I have wronged, I had fallen their victim. She came to save me——

Toby. [*Without*, R. S. E.] Come along, rascal. Stand out of the way!

Enters, dragging in CRUMBS, R. S. E., *and throws him around*, L. C. SERVANT *following, carrying a box, comes down on* R.

Crum. Villain! why am I thus used?

Toby. [*To Grantley.*] Here is the rascal, sir. You know we found that box among the laurel trees. Luckily, you took my advice, and let it rest. We watched, and as I expected, the thief came creeping down to carry away the spoil. We pounced upon him,—here he is, and here's his plunder.

Gran. What answer make you to this?

Crum. None to you. I shall make a clear answer to Mr. Robert Grantley.

Gran. Then speak—Robert Grantley is before you. [*General surprise.*] What! you shrink?—I had heard of your oppression. I wrote for further sums of money, and then, under a feigned character, came to witness the means you'd take to answer the demand. Fie upon you! My father left you to husband my estate: it was your duty to check my extravagance, not feed it. And now, you add to your iniquity by wholesale theft. What say you to this?

Crum. Robert Grantley,—since you are he,—listen. At the mansion you saw a certain picture. You remember you asked me whose it was—I'll tell you. It was the likeness of a young and once virtuous wife. A devil, a golden devil, dazzled her vain heart, and she left her husband and disgraced him. That husband plunged in vice to fly from thought. He gamed, robbed, and was devoted to the thief's reward—the gallows. He escaped and fled abroad. Years rolled away. In a foreign land he met his wife's destroyer, who, knowing not the man he had wronged, fostered him—took him to his heart—made him his man of trust, and brought him to England. He died, and left him to manage his estate for his wild and absent son, Robert Grantley. That man was your father;—the picture is the picture of

his victim;—I—I was her wronged and broken-hearted husband!

Gran. Can it be?

Crum. My purpose was to beggar you—to revenge me on the father, in his dearest part, his darling son!

Gran. Your injuries were great; yet how could your malice survive the author of your wrongs?

Crum. That picture! I have stood and looked at it,—in the still night I have gazed on it, until I have thought the devil himself looked from its eyes, and smiled upon my purpose. That picture, and the recollection that those cursed walls received my wife when she fled from her home, and left me to seek companions with the vile and infamous—Oh! I am an old man!—but there are injuries so graven in the heart, so burnt within the brain, that with the heart and brain must live and die together! Enough. Now for my gaol.

Gran. No; I pardon you; nay, more; I will provide for you.

Crum. Never, I scorn and spit at you.—Am I free?

Stephen *and others bring in* Silver Jack *and* Hyssop, *bound*, R. S. E.

Ste. Here are the thieves! [*To Grantley.*] I was told you were here, sir, and so here I've brought them.—Bob, the carter here, saw them on the road, and knowing our cattle, gave the cry; they were soon unhorsed, and here they are, ready trussed for the gibbet. We found these few matters on them. [*Shows dice, cards, picklocks, &c.*] And here's something folded up. [*Gives paper to Grantley.*

Gran. What is this?—[*Reading bill.*] "Escaped from Newgate—John Harris!"—Who can this mean?

Crum. The man your father robbed! Read and see what time and he have made of him. I took ten guineas from a rich usurer, and was condemned for Tyburn. Your father stole the wife of my bosom, and lived a wealthy, charitable gentleman,—had the respect of all while on the earth, and a lying tombstone when under it! May I leave now? [*Grantley bows, and Crumbs crosses,* R. *Jack and Hyssop give way, and retire a little up,* R. *Crumbs looks fiercely around him, exchanges a look of contempt with Jack & Hys., who laugh, and rushes off,* R.

Jack. Perhaps we're intruding: may we leave, too?

Gran. Away with them, and keep them for the present.

Ste. They deserve hanging, if it's only for the lies they told about Master Heywood's wife. Why, they've been laughing over it as a good joke—[*Jack and Hyssop laugh*]—that they tried to make Martin jealous, that he might save them the sin of blowing out your brains. [*They laugh.*] Oh, you rascals!—your hanging-day will be a rare holiday thirty miles round.

[*Stephen, &c., take Jack and Hyssop off, laughing.*

Mar. Rachel! can I be forgiven? I dare not look at you. [*Rachel throws herself into his arms.*

Toby. I don't wonder at that, he's a poor wizard whom every fool can drive mad. Suspect Rachel! why, if we weren't all made so happy with our grandfather's gold, I'd turn boy again, and thrash you myself. Here was Bullfrog trying to disturb me and my wife.

Bul. Wife!

Toby. Yes. I shall never know what to do with my part of the money, so I must have a wife to get her advice about it. [*Taking Polly's arm.*] I hope [*To Bull.*] you've no objection?

Bul. None, [*Aside,*] as the money's not on the other side. But business is business; you'll want furniture; I have the sweetest four-post bedstead you ever looked upon.

Mar. [*To Grantley.*] I have now, sir, to ask your pardon. Can you excuse the passion of an oppressed——

Gran. Nay, it is I who have to ask forgiveness of you, and of all my tenants, that I have suffered them to be the victims of a mercenary agent. I will henceforth reside on my lands; and, by my future care, endeavour to remedy the injuries committed by my servant. To your wife, Heywood, I probably owe my existence. This farm has, I hear, been in your family for sixty years: may it remain so while the country stands! To-morrow shall give you a freeholder's right to it.

Neighbours, &c. Huzza! Huzza!

Bul. Well, this is capital.—I see. [*Aside.*] I'm future steward to this young man.—But still I have to say one thing. Friendship and generosity are very well; but—[*To Martin*] now, it doesn't concern you,—you're a free-

holder: all of us here aren't so lucky; therefore, as business is business, I trust nobody here will forget

"THE RENT-DAY."

DISPOSITION OF THE CHARACTERS AT THE FALL OF THE CURTAIN.

FARMERS. FARMERS. FARMERS. WOMEN.
DAME BEANSTALK.
BUR. GRAN. TWO CH. MAR. RACH. TWO CH. BEAN. TOBY. POLLY,
BULLFROG.
R.] [I.

THE END.

No. XXIX.

MODERN STANDARD DRAMA.

EDITED BY EPES SARGENT.

AUTHOR OF "VELASCO, A TRAGEDY," &c.

THE

TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA.

A Comedy

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS, CAST OF CHARACTERS, COSTUMES, RELATIVE POSITIONS, &c.

AS PRODUCED AT THE PARK THEATRE BY MR. AND MRS. CHARLES KEAN.

NEW YORK:

WM. TAYLOR & CO., No. 2 ASTOR HOUSE,

AND JARVIS BUILDINGS, NORTH ST., BALTIMORE.

BOSTON:—REDDING AND COMPANY, 8 STATE STREET.

PHILADELPHIA:—G. B. ZEIBER AND CO., 3 LEDGER BUILDING.

NEW ORLEANS:—J. C. MORGAN, AND JOHN SLY.

1846.

PRICE 12 1 2 CENTS.

No. CXIX.

MODERN STANDARD DRAMA.

THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA.

EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION.

Various opinions have been hazarded by Shaksperian commentators, upon the authenticity of this play. It is rejected as entirely spurious by Hanmer, Theobald, and Upton. Mr. Malone considers it as Shakspeare's first dramatic production; and Dr. Johnson, with much pertinency, inquires, "If it be taken from him, to whom shall it be given?" We think Malone's conjecture is nearest the truth. We can easily believe that it was Shakspeare's first comedy—written before he had much opportunity of practically acquainting himself with the dramatic art—before that more consummate union of the poet with the play-wright, which we see in his maturer pieces.

Some sagacious critic asserts, that the internal evidence is against this supposition—that it has neither the beauties nor the faults, the exuberance nor the inequalities, that generally distinguish the inexperienced efforts of a rich and original genius.—Our own judgment leads us to a very different conclusion. We find the hand and spirit of Shakspeare in every line—in the comic as well as the grave portions of the play; but it is Shakspeare in the bud—Shakspeare as a novice, rather than a master in dramatic writing. Where, we would ask, could *Launce* and his dog have strayed from, but from the brain that afterwards gave birth to a *Falstaff* and a *Dogberry?* The character of *Julia* is a foreshadowing of *Viola;* and *Proteus*, *Valentine*, and *Thurio*, are neither devoid of individuality, nor are they creations unworthy of the genius that afterwards gave to the world *Romeo*, *Antonio*, and *Malvolio*.

Blackstone, the celebrated jurist, says of this play, with his characteristic acuteness, that its great fault "is the hastening too abruptly, and without preparation to the *dénouement*, which shows that it was one of Shakspeare's very early performances." Johnson was inclined to believe that it had escaped corruption,

"only because, being seldom played, it was less exposed to the hazards of transcription." This is not improbable. There was no edition of the play till after the author's death, in 1623, although it must have been represented long before that period, as it is mentioned by Meares in his list of the dramatic productions by which Shakspeare had, before the year 1598, established the general reputation of being "the most excellent among the English in both tragedy and comedy."

Attempts have been made to trace the origin of the plot of this piece to the "Diana" of George of Montemayor, a pastoral romance, which, according to Mrs. Lenox, was translated in Shakspeare's time. His obligations to this source appear, however, to be slight, although it is more than probable that he was not unacquainted with it. We occasionally find tracés of pastoral language in the play, as in the song to Sylvia and elsewhere. *Sir Eglamour* is somewhat in the vein of the knights of the old romances. *Sylvia's* address, when she asks him to accompany her to Mantua, and his reply, have been justly commended for the gracefulness of the language and the sentiment. The incident of *Valentine's* joining the robbers is said to have been borrowed from the Arcadia of Sir Philip Sydney; but both this adventure and the story of *Proteus* and *Julia* had no doubt been, time out of mind, portions of the common stock in trade of romance writers.

The versification of "The Two Gentlemen of Verona" is singularly fluent and melodious; but it affords us another evidence that this comedy was one of the "first heirs of the author's invention." It is deficient in those breaks and transitions, which in rendering the verse of his subsequent productions more rugged, made it more adapted to the stage, and less in contrast with the colloquial language of every-day life.

We fancy we can see the revelry of youthful humor (but that humor, a Shakspeare's!) in the soliloquies of *Launce*, and his appeals to *Crab*, his dog, who, by the way, is not the least important character in the play. "Is it probable," asks Thomas Campbell, "that even such a fool as *Launce* should have put his feet into the stocks for the puddings which his dog had stolen, or poked his head through the pillory for the murder of

geese which the same dog had killed?—yet the ungrateful cur never denies one item of the facts, with which *Launce* so tenderly reproaches him. Nay, what is more wonderful, this enormous outrage on the probable excites our common risibility. The imagination is a liberal creditor of its faith as to incidents, when the poet can either touch our affections, or tickle our ridicule. The poet or the fictionist—and every great fictionist is a true poet—gives us an image of life at large, and not of the narrow and stinted probabilities of every-day life. But real life teems with events which, unless we knew them to have actually happened, would seem to us to be next to impossibilities. So that if you chain down the poet from representing every thing that may seem in dry reasoning to be improbable, you will make his fiction cease to be a probable fiction of Nature."

We cannot part with *Launce* and his dog without noticing a little omission or inconsistency, which appears to have escaped the scrutiny of commentators. After making unheard-of sacrifices for his ungrateful cur through the strength of his attachment, the clown seems to have gone to "deliver him as a present to mistress *Silvia*" without any show of compunction or grief whatever. We cannot but think that *Launce* would have shed a few tears on the occasion. Unhandsomely as *Crab* had behaved, it could not have been without a struggle, that his master would have summoned up resolution enough to abandon him to another. We look in vain for some manifestation of these remorseful feelings on the part of Launce.

An edition of the "Two Gentlemen of Verona" was altered and prepared for the stage by John Philip Kemble in 1808, in which some profane hand has made *Launce* to re-appear in the fourth and fifth acts, and talk nonsense, of which we are quite certain even *Crab* would have been ashamed. But the present stage edition is of more recent date, and contains no such impertinent interpolations. It is now for the first time published; and we take pleasure in expressing our acknowledgments to Mr. Charles Kean for the loan of the carefully-revised prompt-book from which our copy was prepared. The stage directions in this edition will be found unusually full and appropriate, and add much to its theatrical value; while it must be interest-

ing to the general reader to see what curtailments and alterations are expedient to render a comedy of Shakspeare's acceptable to a modern audience.*

We learn from Cumberland, that "Liston's *Thurio* was better than his *Launce*, though neither of them was a just representation. Munden's *Launce* was acting *indeed;* he put in requisition his whole gallery of faces, varying them according to the jest. He added, also, a critical knowledge of the part—he knew *Launce* to be a buffoon; but remembering that it was Shakspeare who made him one, he bestowed his first attention on the *words*, and the *vis comica* he introduced only as an illustration of them. Blanchard's *Speed* was excellent, and worthy to stand by the side of Munden's *Launce*. Kemble and Pope, in *Valentine* and *Proteus*, completed the admirable cast of this delightful comedy."

The present version will be produced for the first time in this country, at the Park Theatre, Oct. 5, 1846, with a cast which will fairly test its attractiveness as an *acting* comedy. What we may expect from the *Julia* of Mrs. Kean, may be imagined by those who have witnessed her *Rosalind* and *Viola;* and we have no fear but Mr. Kean will bring out in full relief all the capabilities of the character of the gentle, but brave and generous *Valentine*. In the *Launce* of Mr. Bass we may look for a personation, which will remind experienced play-goers of that celebrated school, of which he is one of the last and worthiest representatives—a school which numbered Munden, Dowton, and Blanchard among its ornaments. The *Speed* of Mr. Fisher cannot fail to be also highly successful; for, in his peculiar line, embracing testy old gentlemen, consummate simpletons, and many kindred characters, we consider him without a rival.

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* At the Park theatre, the following lines from Shakspeare's "Venus and Adonis" are introduced as a glee on the first entrance of the Robbers:

To see his face the lion walks along,
Behind some hedge, because he would not fear him;
To recreate himself, when he hath sung,
The tiger would be tame, and gently hear him.

The following is sung as the *finale* of the closing act:

Good Duke, receive thy daughter!
Hymen from Heaven brought her;
Such union is Juno's crown—
To Hymen honour and renown!

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

	Covent Garden, 1808.	*Park*, 1846.
Duke of Milan	Mr. Murray.	Mr. Bellamy.
Valentine	" J. P. Kemble.	" Charles Kean.
Proteus	" Pope.	" Dyott.
Antonio	" Creswell.	" Anderson.
Thurio	" Liston.	" A. Andrews.
Eglamour	" Claremont.	" Sutherland
Speed	" Blanchard.	" Fisher
Launce	" Munden.	" Bass.
Panthino	" Chapman.	" M^c^ Dousll.
Host	" Davenport.	" Povey.
First Outlaw	" King.	" Pearson.
Second do	" Treby.	" Sprague.
Third do	" Taylor.	" Gallot.
Julia	Miss Norton.	Mrs. Chas. Kean.
Silvia	Miss Smith.	Mrs. Abbott.
Lucetta	Miss Waddy.	Mrs. Dyott

Officer, Chorus, Musicians, Attendants, &c.

COSTUMES.

DUKE.—White kerseymere body and trunk, silver lace, large crimson velvet robe, trimmed with silver and fur.

VALENTINE.—Green velvet shirt with hanging sleeves, lined with white satin and richly embroidered with gold, white satin and gold tight under-sleeves and pouch, white muslin drawing shirt, white silk pantaloons, black velvet shoes with strap on the instep, black velvet hat and white feathers.—*Second dress:* Plain green cloth shirt, lightly trimmed with black, green pantaloons, and russet shoes.

PROTEUS.—Scarlet kerseymere tunic, black velvet cloak with spangled trimming, silk pantaloons, green silk domino.

ANTONIO.—Purple velvet shape with blue puffs and spangled trimmings, arm-hole cloak, and blue stockings.

THURIO.—White kerseymere body and trunks, scarlet satin cloak, spangled richly all over.

EGLAMOUR.—Yellow spangled shirt and black velvet spangled cloak.—*Second dress:* A pilgrim's gown.

SPEED.—Green and black flowered woollen shape, green stockings and puffs.

LAUNCE.—Red and yellow flowered woollen shape with green puffs, green cloak. broad leather belt, and green stockings.

PANTHINO.—Gray shape and pantaloons, crimson silk sash, and domino.

HOST.—Peasant's shape-dress.

OUTLAWS.—Short doublets and trunks, hats and feathers, swords, cloaks, &c.

JULIA.—Pale pink silk dress with silver gauze over it, coloured jewels round the waist and head.—*Second dress:* Dove-coloured shirt with hanging sleeves, blue under-sleeves, white pantaloons.

SILVIA.—Blue velvet boddice, with short sleeves trimmed with gold bullion and looped up with a jewel, a nett crossed with gold covering neck and arms, white muslin demi-train petticoat, richly flowered with gold over white satin, a gold nett covering the head, small blue velvet hat placed on side of the head with three small white feathers, the hair braided in front and hanging in curls down the back.

LUCETTA.—Blue silk petticoat, yellow jacket trimmed with crimson and silver.

EXITS AND ENTRANCES.

R. means *Right;* L. *Left;* R. D. *Right Door;* L. D. *Left Door;* S. E. *Second Entrance;* U. E. *Upper Entrance;* M. D. *Middle Door.*

RELATIVE POSITIONS.

R., means *Right;* L., *Left;* C., *Centre;* R. C., *Right of Centre;* L. C., *Left of Centre.*

THE

TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Street in Verona.*

Enter VALENTINE *and* PROTEUS, L. S. E.

Val. Cease to persuade, my loving Proteus;
Home-keeping youth have ever homely wits.
Were 't not, affection chains thy captive heart
To the sweet glances of thy honoured love,
I rather would entreat thy company
To see the wonders of the world abroad,
Than, living dully sluggardized at home,
Wear out thy hours with shapeless idleness.
But, since thou lov'st, love still, and thrive therein,
Even as I would, when I to love begin.

Pro. (L.) Wilt thou begone? Sweet Valentine, adieu!
Think on thy Proteus, when thou, haply, see'st
Some rare, note-worthy object in thy travel;
Wish me partaker in thy happiness,
When thou dost meet good hap; and, in thy danger,
If ever danger do environ thee,
Commend thy grievance to my holy prayers;
For I will be thy beadsman, Valentine.

Val. And on a love-book pray for my success.

Pro. Upon some book I love, I'll pray for thee.

Val. That's on some shallow story of deep love,
Of love, where scorn is bought with groans; coy looks
With heart-sore sighs; one fading moment's mirth
With twenty watchful, weary, tedious nights.

If haply won, perhaps a hapless gain;
If lost, why then a grievous labour won:
However, but a folly bought with wit,
Or else a wit by folly overthrown.

Pro. So, by your circumstance, you call me fool.

Val. So, by your circumstance, I fear you'll prove.

Pro. 'Tis love you cavil at: I am not Love.

Val. Love is your master, for he masters you;
And he that is so yokéd by a fool,
Methinks should not be chronicled for wise.

Pro. Yet writers say, As in the sweetest bud
The eating canker dwells, so eating love
Inhabits in the finest wits of all.

Val. And writers say, as the most forward bud
Is eaten by the canker ere it blow,
Even so by love the young and tender wit
Is turned to folly; blasting in the bud,
Losing his verdure even in the prime,
And all the fair effects of future hopes.
But wherefore waste I time to counsel thee?
That art a votary to fond desire!
Once more, adieu! My father, at the road,
Expects my coming, there to see me shipped.

Pro. And thither will I bring thee, Valentine.

Val. Sweet Proteus, no: now let us take our leave.
At Milan, let me hear from thee by letters,
Of thy success in love, and what news else
Betideth here in absence of thy friend;
And I likewise will visit thee with mine.

Pro. All happiness bechance to thee in Milan!

Val. As much to you at home! And so, farewell!

[*Exit Valentine,* R.

Pro. He after honour hunts—I after love!
He leaves his friends, to dignify them more;
I leave myself, my friends, and all, for love.
Thou, Julia, thou hast metamorphosed me:
Made me neglect my studies, lose my time,
War with good counsel, set the world at naught,
Made wit with musing weak, heart-sick with thought.

Enter SPEED, L.

Speed. Sir Proteus, save you! Saw you my master?

Pro. But now he parted hence, to embark for Milan.

Speed. Twenty to one, then, he is shipped already; And I have played the sheep, in losing him.

Pro. Indeed, a sheep doth very often stray, An if the shepherd be awhile away.

Speed. You conclude that my master is a shepherd, then, and I a sheep?

Pro. I do.

Speed. The shepherd seeks the sheep, and not the sheep the shepherd; but I seek my master, and my master seeks not me: therefore, I am no sheep.

Pro. The sheep for fodder follow the shepherd, the shepherd for food follows not the sheep; thou for wages followest thy master, thy master for wages follows not thee: therefore, thou art a sheep.

Speed. Such another proof will make me cry baa.

Pro. (L.) But dost thou hear? Gav'st thou my letter to Julia?

Speed. (R.) Ay, sir. I, a lost mutton, gave your letter to her, a laced mutton; and she, a laced mutton, gave me, a lost mutton, nothing for my labour.

Pro. Come, come, open the matter in brief: what said she?

Speed. Open your purse, that the money, and the matter, may be both at once delivered.

Pro. Well, sir, here is for your pains. [*Takes a small square velvet purse from his girdle, and gives Speed money.*] What said she?

Speed. Truly, sir, I think you'll hardly win her.

Pro. Why? Couldst thou perceive so much from her?

Speed. Sir, I could perceive nothing at all from her—no, not so much as a ducat for delivering your letter.

Pro. What, said she nothing?

Speed. No; not so much as—*Take this for thy pains.* To testify your bounty, I thank you; you have testerned* me: in requital whereof, henceforth carry your letters yourself. And so, sir, I'll commend you to my master.

[*Speed crosses to* R.

Pro. Go, go, begone, to save your ship from wreck; Which cannot perish, having thee aboard, Being destined to a drier death on shore. [*Exit Speed,* R.

* Given me a sixpence.

I fear my Julia would not deign my lines,
Receiving them from such a worthless post.
I must go send some better messenger. [*Exit*, L.

SCENE II.—*The Garden of Julia's House in Verona.—An Arbour in arch*, R., *with Seats in it.*

Enter JULIA *and* LUCETTA, L.

Jul. But say, Lucetta, now we are alone,
Wouldst thou then counsel me to fall in love?
Luc. Ay, madam; so you stumble not unheedfully.
Jul. Of all the fair resort of gentlemen
That every day with parle encounter me,
In thy opinion, which is worthiest love?
Luc. Please you repeat their names, I'll show my mind
According to my shallow simple skill.
Jul. What think'st thou of the fair Sir Eglamour?
Luc. As of a knight well-spoken, neat and fine;
But, were I you, he never should be mine.
Jul. What think'st thou of the rich Mercutio?
Luc. Well, of his wealth; but of himself, so, so.
Jul. (R.) What think'st thou of the gentle Proteus?
Luc. Pardon, dear madam; 'tis a passing shame
That I, unworthy body as I am,
Should censure thus on lovely gentlemen.
Jul. Why not on Proteus, as of all the rest?
Luc. (L.) Then thus—of many good, I think him best.
Jul. Your reason?
Luc. I have no other but a woman's reason:
I think him so, because I think him so.
Jul. And wouldst thou have me cast my love on him?
Luc. Ay, if you thought your love not cast away.
Jul. Why, he, of all the rest, hath never moved me.
Luc. Yet he, of all the rest, I think, best loves you.
Jul. They do not love, that do not show their love.
Luc. Oh! they love least, that let men know their love.
Jul. I would I knew his mind.
Luc. Peruse this paper, madam. [*Presenting a paper very quickly.*]
Jul. [*Reads.*] *To Julia*—Say, from whom?
Luc. That the contents will show.
Jul. Say, say: who gave it thee?

Luc. Sir Valentine's page; and sent, I think, from Proteus; [*Julia takes the letter.*
He would have given it you; but I, being in the way,
Did in your name receive it: pardon the fault, I pray.
Jul. Now, by my modesty, a goodly broker!
Dare you presume to harbour wanton lines?
To whisper and conspire against my youth?
Now, trust me, 'tis an office of great worth,
And you an officer fit for the place.
[*Gives the letter to Lucetta.*
There, take the paper, see it be returned;
Or else return no more into my sight. [*Goes up,* R.
Luc. To plead for love deserves more fee than hate.
Jul. (up R.) Will you be gone?
Luc. That you may ruminate. [*Exit,* L.
Jul. And yet, I would I had o'erlooked the letter.
[*Goes to 1st* E. L.
It were a shame to call her back again,
And pray her to a fault, for which I chid her. [*Returns to* C.
What fool is she, that knows I am a maid,
And would not force the letter to my view?
Since maids, in modesty, say *no,* to that
Which they would have the profferer construe, *ay.*
Fie! fie! how wayward is this foolish love,
That, like a testy babe, will scratch the nurse,
And presently, all humbled, kiss the rod!
My penance is, to call Lucetta back,
And ask remission for my folly past. [*Goes to* L.
What ho! Lucetta! Lucetta! [*Returns to* C.

Enter LUCETTA, L., *with the letter, which she turns over while speaking.*

Luc. What would your ladyship?
Jul. Is it near dinner-time?
Luc. I would it were,
That you might kill your stomach on your meat,
[*Purposely drops the letter, and hastily picks it up.*
And not upon your maid.
Jul. What is it you took up
So gingerly?
Luc. Nothing.
Jul. Why didst thou stoop, then?

Luc. To take up a paper that I let fall.
Jul. And is that paper nothing?
Luc. Nothing concerning me.
Jul. Then let it lie for those that it concerns.
Luc. Madam, it will not lie where it concerns,
Unless it have a false interpreter.
Jul. Some love of yours hath writ to you in rhyme.
Luc. That I might sing it, madam, to a tune.
Give me a note: your ladyship can set.
Jul. As little by such toys as may be possible.
Best sing it to the tune of *Light o' love.*
Let's see your song:—How now, minion?
Luc. Keep tune there still, so you will sing it out:
And yet, methinks, I do not like this tune.
Jul. You do not?
Luc. No, madam: it is too sharp.
Jul. (c.) You, minion, are too saucy.
This babble shall not henceforth trouble me.
Here is a coil with protestation! [*Tears the letter—goes* R.
Go, get you gone:
[*Lucetta stoops to pick up the pieces of the letter.*
And let the papers lie:
You would be fingering them, to anger me.
Luc. She makes it strange; but she would be best pleased
To be so angered with another letter. [*Exit,* L.
Jul. [*Watching till Luc. is out of hearing.*] Nay, would I were so angered with the same!
Oh, hateful hands, to tear such loving words!
[*Kneels on one knee,* C., *picks up pieces of the letter, and kisses them.*
I'll kiss each several paper for amends.
And here is writ—*kind Julia:*—unkind Julia!
Look, here is writ—*love-wounded Proteus:*—
Poor wounded name! my bosom, as a bed,
Shall lodge thee, till thy wound be thoroughly healed.
But twice, or thrice was Proteus written down?
[*In alarm, placing her hands on the fragments, and looking up,* R.
Be calm, good wind, blow not a word away,
Till I have found each letter in the letter.
Lo here in one line is his name twice writ,—

Poor forlorn Proteus, passionate Proteus,
To the sweet Julia;—that I'll tear away;—
And yet I will not:—sith so prettily
He couples it to his complaining names,
Thus will I fold them one upon another,
Now kiss, embrace, contend, do what you will.

[*Places them on her bosom with both her hands, and, on seeing Lucetta, rises hastily.*

Enter Lucetta, L.

Luc. Madam, dinner's ready, and your father stays.
Jul. Well, let us go. [*Crosses to* L.
Luc. (c.) What, shall these papers lie like tell-tales here?
Jul. If you respect them, best to take them up.
Luc. Nay, I was taken up for laying them down;
Yet here they shall not lie, for catching cold.

[*Lucetta picks up the papers.*

Jul. I see, you have a month's mind to them.
Luc. [*Pausing in picking up the papers.*] Ay, madam, you may say what sights you see;
I see things too: although you judge I wink.
Jul. Come, come, will't please you go? [*Exeunt,* L.

Scene III.—*A Room in Antonio's House, in Verona.*

Enter Antonio *and* Panthino, L.

Ant. Tell me, Panthino, what sad talk was that
Wherewith my brother held you in the cloister?
Pan. 'Twas of his nephew, Proteus, your son.
Ant. Why, what of him?
Pan. He wondered that your lordship
Would suffer him to spend his youth at home;
While other men, of slender reputation,
Put forth their sons to seek preferment out:
And did request me to impórtune you
To let him spend his time no more at home;
Which would be great impeachment to his age,
In having known no travel in his youth.
Ant. Nor need'st thou much impórtune me to that
Whereon this month I have been hammering.
I have considered well his loss of time;

And how he cannot be a perfect man,
Not being tried and tutored in the world;
Then, tell me, whither were I best to send him?

Pan. I think your lordship is not ignorant,
How his companion, youthful Valentine,
Attends the emperor in his royal court.

Ant. I like thy counsel; well hast thou advised:
And, with the speediest expedition,
Will hence despatch him to the emperor's court.

Pan. To-morrow, may it please you, Don Alphonso,
With other gentlemen of good esteem,
Are journeying to salute the emperor,
And to commend their service to his will.

Ant. Good company; with them shall Proteus go:—
And in good time.—Now will we break with him.

[*Goes up*, R., *with Pan., looks*, L., *and sees Proteus.*

Enter PROTEUS, *reading a letter, followed by* LAUNCE, L.

Pro. Sweet love! sweet lines! sweet life!
Here is her hand, the agent of her heart;
Here is her oath for love, her honour's pawn
Oh, that our fathers would applaud our loves,
To seal our happiness with their consents!
Oh, heavenly Julia! [*Hastily folds the letter as Antonio and Panthino advance*, L.

Ant. How now? what letter are you reading there?

Pro. May't please your lordship, 'tis a word or two
Of commendation sent from Valentine,
Delivered by a friend that came from him.

Ant. Lend me the letter; let me see what news.

Pro. [*Recedes*, L., *and puts letter in his belt.*] There is no news, my lord; but that he writes
How happily he lives, how well beloved,
And daily graced by the emperor;
Wishing me with him, partner of his fortune.

Ant. And how stand you affected to his wish?

Pro. As one relying on your lordship's will,
And not depending on his friendly wish.

Ant. My will is something sorted with his wish:
Muse not that I thus suddenly proceed;
For what I will, I will, and there an end.
I am resolved that thou shalt spend some time

With Valentinus in the emperor's court;
What maintenance he from his friends receives,
Like exhibition thou shalt have from me.
To-morrow be in readiness to go:—[*Pro. is about to speak.*
Excuse it not, for I am peremptory. [*Crosses*, R.

Pro. My lord, I cannot be so soon provided.
Please you, deliberate a day or two.

Ant. Look, what thou want'st shall be sent after thee;
No more of stay; to-morrow thou must go.—
Come on, Panthino; you shall be employed
To hasten on his expedition.
[*Exeunt Antonio and Panthino*, R.

Pro. Thus have I shunned the fire, for fear of burning;
And drenched me in the sea, where I am drowned:
I feared to show my father Julia's letter,
Lest he should take exceptions to my love;
And with the vantage of mine own excuse
Hath he excepted most against my love.
Oh, how this spring of love resembleth
The uncertain glory of an April day;
Which now shows all the beauty of the sun,
And by and by a cloud takes all away!

Enter PANTHINO, R.

Pan. Sir Proteus, your father calls for you;
He is in haste; therefore, I pray you, go.
[*Crosses behind, and exit Panthino*, L.

Pro. Why, this it is!—my heart accords thereto;
And yet a thousand times it answers, no. [*Exeunt*, R.

SCENE IV.—*The Garden of Julia's House in Verona.*—PROTEUS *and* JULIA *discovered standing in the Arbour—She is weeping—her head on his shoulder—they come forward.*

Pro. (R.) Have patience, gentle Julia.

Jul. I must, where is no remedy.

Pro. When possibly I can, I will return.

Jul. (L.) If you turn not, you will return the sooner:—
Keep this remembrance for thy Julia's sake
[*Gives him a ring.*

Pro. Why, then, we'll make exchange: here, take you this:— [*Gives Julia a ring.*

Here is my hand for my true constancy ;
And when that hour o'erslips me in the day
Wherein I sigh not, Julia, for thy sake,
The next ensuing hour some foul mischance
Torment me for my love's forgetfulness !
My father stays my coming : answer not ;
The tide is now :—nay, not thy tide of tears ;
That tide will stay me longer than I should.
Julia, farewell !

[*Julia makes an effort to speak, through her tears, then hurries out*, R.

What ! gone without a word ?
Ay, so true love should do : it cannot speak ;
For truth hath better deeds than words to grace it.

Enter Panthino, L.

Pan. Sir Proteus, you are staid for.

Pro. Well, I come : Go : I come, I come. [*Crosses to* L.
Alas ! this parting strikes poor lovers dumb. [*Exeunt*, L.

Enter Launce, *leading a dog*, R. S. E.

Laun. Nay, 'twill be this hour ere I have done weeping; all the kind of the Launces have this very fault ; I have received [*Showing a small, dirty, leathern money-bag,*] my proportion, like the prodigal son, and am going with Sir Proteus to the Imperial's court. I think, Crab, my dog, be the sourest-natured dog that lives : my mother weeping, my father wailing, my sister crying, our maid howling, our cat wringing her hands, and all our house in a great perplexity, yet did not this cruel-hearted cur shed one tear ; he is a stone, a very pebble-stone, and has no more pity in him than a dog : [*Fastens dog to a staple in stage*, R.] a Jew would have wept to have seen our parting ; why, my grandam having no eyes, look you, wept herself blind at my parting. Nay, I'll show you the manner of it : [*Takes off his shoes and kneels*, L.C.] This shoe is my father ;—no, this left shoe is my father ;—no, no, this left shoe is my mother ;—nay, that cannot be so neither ;—yes, it is so, it is so : it hath the worser sole ; This shoe, with the hole in it, is my mother, and this my father : A vengeance on't ! there 'tis ; now, sir, this staff is my sister ; [*Sticks staff up*, R. C.] for, look you, she is as white as a lily, and as small as a wand ; this

hat is Nan, our maid; [*Lays hat on the Stage;*] I am the dog:—no, the dog is himself, and I am the dog,—Oh, the dog is me, and I am myself; ay, so, so. Now come I to my father; *Father, your blessing;* now should not the shoe speak a word for weeping; now should I kiss my father; [*Kisses shoe, and lays it down;*] well, he weeps on;—now come I to my mother, (Oh, that she could speak now!) like a wood woman; well, I kiss her; [*Kisses other shoe;*] why, there 'tis; here's my mother's breath up and down: now come I to my sister; [*Embraces wand;*] mark the moan she makes: now the dog all this while sheds not a tear, nor speaks a word; but see how I lay the dust with my tears.

Enter PANTHINO, L.

Pan. Launce, away, away, aboard; thy master is shipped. What's the matter? why weepest thou, man? Away, ass, you will lose the tide if you tarry any longer.

Laun. [*Rises.*] It is no matter if the ty'd were lost; for it is the unkindest ty'd that ever man ty'd.

[*Puts on shoes, hat, &c.*

Pan. What's the unkindest tide?

Laun. Why, he that's ty'd here; Crab, my dog.

Pan. Tut, man, I mean thou'lt lose the flood; and, in losing the flood, lose thy voyage; and, in losing thy voyage, lose thy master; and, in losing thy master, lose thy service; and, in losing thy service,—Why dost thou stop my mouth?

Laun. For fear thou should'st lose thy tongue.

Pan. Where should I lose my tongue?

Laun. In thy tale. [*Unties the dog.*] Lose the tide, and the voyage, and the master, and the service? The tide!—Why, man, if the river were dry, I am able to fill it with my tears; if the wind were down, I could drive the boat with my sighs. [*Crosses slowly,* L.

Pan. Come, come, away, man; I was sent to call thee.

Laun. Sir, call me what thou darest.

Pan. Wilt thou go?

Laun. Well, I will go. [*Exeunt,* L.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Duke's Palace at Milan. An Arch,* R. F *A high staircase with practicable door at landing set on Stage from* L. S. E., *which works off at change of scene.*

Enter VALENTINE *and* SPEED *through arch,* R. F. *Valentine crosses,* L., *when Speed sees the glove in front,* R. C., *picks it up, and speaks.*

Speed. (R.) Sir, sir, your glove.
Val. (L.) Not mine; my gloves are on.
Speed. Why, then, this may be yours, for this is but one.
Val. Ha! let me see. [*Crosses to him.*] Ay, give it me; it's mine:—
Sweet ornament, that decks a thing divine!— [*Kisses it.*
Ah, Silvia! Silvia!
Speed. Madam Silvia! Madam Silvia! [*At stairs,* L.
Val. (R.) How now, sirrah!
Speed. She is not within hearing, sir,
Val. Why, sir, who bade you call her?
Speed. Your worship, or else I mistook.
Val. Well, you'll still be too forward. [*Crosses,* L.
Speed. And yet I was last chidden for being too slow. [*Goes down,* R.
Val. Go to, sir; tell me, do you know Madam Silvia?
Speed. She that your worship loves?
Val. Why, how know you that I am in love?
Speed. Marry, by these special marks: First, you have learned, like Sir Proteus, to wreathe your arms like a male-content; to relish a love song, like a Robin-redbreast; to walk alone, like one that had the pestilence; to sigh, like a school-boy that had lost his A B C; to weep, like a young wench that had buried her grandam; to fast, like one that takes diet; to watch, like one that fears robbing; to speak puling, like a beggar at Hallowmas. You were wont, when you laughed, to crow like a cock; when you walked, to walk like one of the lions; when you fasted, it was presently after dinner; when you looked sadly, it was for want of money: and now you are metamorphosed with a mistress, that, when I look on you, I can hardly think you my master.

Val. Are all these things perceived in me? [*Crosses*, R.

Speed. They are all perceived without you.

Val. But, tell me, dost thou know my Lady Silvia?

Speed. She that you gaze on, as she sits at supper?

Val. Hast thou observed that? Even she I mean. Oh! I have loved her ever since I saw her; and still I see her beautiful. [*Crosses*, L.

Speed. If you love her, you cannot see her.

Val. Why?

Speed. Because love is blind. Oh, that you had mine eyes; or your own had the lights they were wont to have, when you chid at Sir Proteus for going ungartered!

Val. What should I see then?

Speed. Your present folly: for he, being in love, could not see to garter his hose; and you, being in love, cannot see to put on your hose.

Val. (*Crosses*, R.) Belike, boy, then, you are in love: for last morning you could not see to wipe my shoes.

Speed. True, sir; I was in love with my bed; I thank you, you swinged me for my love, which makes me the bolder to chide you for yours.

Val. Last night she enjoined me to write some lines to one she loves.

The door on staircase opens, and SILVIA *descends.*

Speed. And have you?

Val. I have. Peace—here she comes. [*Speed goes up*, R.

Speed. [*Aside*, L.] Oh, excellent! Now will he interpret to her.

Val. (R.) Madam and mistress, a thousand good morrows.

Speed. [*Aside.*] Oh, give you good even! here's a million of manners.

Sil. Sir Valentine and servant, to you two thousand.

Speed. [*Aside.*] He should give her interest, and she gives it him.

Val. As you enjoined me, I have writ your letter, [*Presents a letter.*

Unto the secret, nameless friend of yours,
Which I was much unwilling to proceed in,
But for my duty to your ladyship.

Sil. [*Takes the letter and opens it.*] I thank you, gentle servant; 'tis very clerkly done.

Val. (R.) Now, trust me, madam, it came hardly off;
For, being ignorant to whom it goes,
I writ at random, very doubtfully.

Sil. (C.) Perchance, you think too much of so much pains?

Val. No, madam; so it stead you, I will write,
Please you command, a thousand times as much:
And yet,——

Sil. [*Reads.*] A pretty period! Well, I guess the sequel;
And yet I will not name it: and yet I care not;—
And yet take this again—[*Presenting him the letter*]; and yet I thank you;—
Meaning henceforth to trouble you no more.

Speed. [*Aside.*] And yet you will; and yet another yet.

Val. What means your ladyship? Do you not like it?

Sil. Yes, yes; the lines are quaintly writ;
But, since unwillingly, take them again,—
Nay, take them. [*Forces letter on him.*

Val. Madam, they are for you. [*Takes letter.*

Sil. Ay, ay, you writ them, sir, at my request;
But I will none of them; they are for you:—
I would have had them writ more movingly. [*Crosses,* R.

Val. (C.) Please you, I'll write your ladyship another.

Sil. (R.) And, when it's writ, for my sake read it over;
And if it please you, so;—if not, why, so.

Val. If it please me, madam! what then?

Sil. Why, if it please you, take it for your labour.
And so, good morrow, servant. [*Exit,* R.

Speed. [*Advances,* L.] Oh, jest unseen, inscrutable, invisible,
As a nose on a man's face, or a weathercock on a steeple!
My master sues to her; and she hath taught her suitor,
He being her pupil, to become her tutor.
Oh, excellent device! was there ever heard a better?
That my master, being scribe, to himself should write the letter?

Val. (R. C.) How now, sir? What, are you reasoning with yourself?

Speed. Nay, I was rhyming,—'tis you that have the reason. Why, do you not perceive the jest?

Val. No, believe me.

Speed. No believing you indeed, sir. But did you perceive her earnest?

Val. She gave me none, except an angry word.

Speed. Why, she hath given you a letter.

Val. That's the letter I writ to her friend.

Speed. And that letter hath she delivered, and there an end.

Val. I would it were no worse.

Speed. I'll warrant you 'tis as well;

'For often you have writ to her; and she, in modesty,
Or else for want of idle time, could not again reply;
Or fearing else some messenger that might her mind discover,
Herself hath taught her love himself to write unto her lover.'

All this I speak in print; for in print I found it.

[*Valentine crosses,* R.

Why muse you, sir? 'tis near dinner-time.

Val. I have dined. [*Crosses,* L., *then up* R., *and exit* R.

Speed. Ay; but hearken, sir! Though the cameleon love can feed on the air, I am one that am nourished by my victuals, and would fain have meat: Oh, be not like your mistress; be moved; be moved!

[*Exit, following Valentine.*

SCENE II.—*Milan.—Garden of the Duke's Palace.*

Enter SILVIA, THURIO, VALENTINE, *and* SPEED, R. U. E.

Sil. (C.) Servant——

Val. Mistress?

Speed. (R.) Master, Sir Thurio frowns on you.

[*Aside to Valentine*

Val. Ay, boy, it's for love.

Speed. Not of you.

Val. (R. C.) Of my mistress, then.

Sil. Servant, you are sad.

Val. Indeed, madam, I seem so.

Thu. (L. C.) Seem you that you are not? [*Affectedly.*

Val. Haply, I do.

Thu. So do counterfeits.

Val. So do you.

Thu. What seem I, that I am not?

Val. Wise.

Thu. What instance of the contrary?

Val. Your folly.

Thu. How?

Sil. What, angry, Sir Thurio? do you change colour?

Val. Give him leave, madam; he is a kind of cameleon.

Thu. That hath more mind to feed on your blood, than live in your air.

Val. You have said, sir.

Thu. Ay, sir; and done, too, for this time.

Val. I know it well, sir; you always end ere you begin.

Sil. A fine volley of words, gentlemen, and quickly shot off.

Val. 'Tis, indeed, madam; we thank the giver.

il. Who is that, servant?

Val. Yourself, sweet lady; for you gave the fire. Sir Thurio borrows his wit from your ladyship's looks, and spends what he borrows kindly in your company.

[*Exit Speed,* R. U. E.

Thu. Sir, if you spend word for word with me, I shall make your wit bankrupt.

Val. I know it well, sir; you have an exchequer of words, and, I think, no other treasure to give your followers; for it appears by their bare liveries that they live by your bare words.

Enter Duke, Eglamour, *and a* Knight, L.

Sil. No more, gentlemen, no more; here comes my father.

Duke. Now, daughter Silvia, you are hard beset.
Sir Valentine, your father's in good health;

[*Crosses to Valentine.*

What say you to a letter from your friends,
Of much good news?

Val. My lord, I will be thankful
To any happy messenger from thence.

Duke. Know you Don Antonio, your countryman?

Val. Ay, my good lord, I know the gentleman
To be of worth, and worthy estimation.

Duke. Hath he not a son?

Val. Ay, my good lord; a son that well deserves
The honour and regard of such a father
Duke. You know him well?
Val. I knew him as myself; for, from our infancy,
We have conversed, and spent our hours together;
And, though myself have been an idle truant,
Yet hath Sir Proteus (for that's his name,)
Made use and fair advantage of his days,—
His years but young, but his experience old;
His head unmellowed, but his judgment ripe;
And, in a word, (for far behind his worth
Come all the praises that I now bestow,)
He is complete in feature and in mind
With all good grace to grace a gentleman.
Duke. Well, sir, this gentleman is come to me
With commendation from great potentates;
And here he means to spend his time awhile.
I think 'tis no unwelcome news to you.
Val. Should I have wished a thing, it had been he.
Duke. Welcome him, then, according to his worth.
[*Crosses to* L.
Silvia, I speak to you—and you, Sir Thurio:—
[*Thu., anxious to attract Duke's notice, bows affectedly*
For Valentine, I need not cite him to it:
I'll send him hither to you presently.
[*Exeunt Duke, Eglamour, and Knight,* L.
Val. (C.) This is the gentleman I told your ladyship
Had come along with me, but that his mistress
Did hold his eyes locked in her crystal looks.
Sil. (L. C.) Belike, that now she hath enfranchised them
Upon some other pawn for fealty.
Val. Nay, sure, I think she holds them prisoners still.
Sil. Nay, then, he should be blind; and, being blind,
How could he see his way to seek out you?
Val. Why, lady, love hath twenty pair of eyes
Thu. (R. C.) They say that love hath not an eye at all.
Val. To see such lovers, Thurio, as yourself;
Upon a homely subject love can wink.
Sil. Have done, have done; here comes the gentleman.

Enter Proteus, L.

Val. Welcome, dear Proteus!—Mistress, I beseech you

Confirm his welcome with some special favour.
Sil. His worth is warrant for his welcome hither,
If this be he you oft have wished to hear from.
Val. Mistress, it is:
Sweet lady, entertain him for your servant.
Pro. [*Kneels and kisses her hand.*] My duty will I boast of, nothing else.
Sil. And duty never yet did want his meed.
Servant, you are welcome to a worthless mistress.
Pro. I'll die on him that says so, but yourself. [*Rises.*
Sil. That you are welcome?
Pro. No; that you are worthless.

Enter Eglamour, L. U. E.

Egl. Madam, my lord, your father, would speak with you.
Sil. I'll wait upon his pleasure. [*Exit Eglamour,* L.
Come, Sir Thurio, [*Goes up with Thurio, who gives his arm to her on her* L. *Val. and Pro. cross,* R.
Go with me. Once more, new servant, welcome:
[*Valentine goes up to her.*
I'll leave you to confer of home affairs;
When you have done, we look to hear from you.
Pro. We'll both attend upon your ladyship.
[*Kisses her hand. Exeunt Silvia and Thurio,* L. U. E.
Val. [*Looks after Silvia, then comes down to Proteus, and takes both his hands.*] Now, tell me, how do all from whence you came?
Pro. (R.) Your friends are well, and have them much commended.
Val. (L.) How do yours?
Pro. I left them all in health.
Val. How does your lady? and how thrives your love?
Pro. My tales of love were wont to weary you;
I know you joy not in a love-discourse.
Val. Ay, Proteus, but that life is altered now;
I have done penance for contemning love;
Whose high imperious thoughts have punished me
With bitter fasts, with penitential groans,
With nightly tears, and daily heart-sore sighs;
For, in revenge of my contempt of love

Love hath chased sleep from my enthralléd eyes,
And made them watchers of mine own heart's sorrow.
Now, no discourse except it be of love;
Now can I break my fast, dine, sup, and sleep
Upon the very naked name of love.

Pro. Enough; I read your fortune in your eye:
Was this the idol that you worship so?

Val. Even she; and is she not a heavenly saint?
Sovereign to all the creatures on the earth?

Pro. Except my mistress.

Val. Nay, except not any.

Pro. Have I not reason to prefer mine own?

Val. And I will help thee to prefer her, too:
She shall be dignified with this high honour,—
To bear my lady's train; lest the base earth
Should from her vesture chance to steal a kiss;
And, of so great a favour growing proud,
Disdain to root the summer-smelling flower,
And make rough winter everlastingly.

[*Goes*, L., *and returns*, C.

Pro. Why, Valentine?

Val. Pardon me, Proteus: all I can, is nothing
To her, whose worth makes other worthies nothing:
She is alone.

Pro. Then let her alone.

Val. Not for the world! Why, man, she is mine own;
And I as rich in having such a jewel,
As twenty seas, if all their sand were pearl,
The water nectar, and the rocks pure gold.
Forgive me, that I do not dream on thee,
Because thou seest me dote upon my love.
My foolish rival, that her father likes,
Only for his possessions are so huge,
Is gone with her along; and I must after, [*Goes hastily*, L.
For love, thou know'st, is full of jealousy.

Pro. But she loves you?

Val. Ay, and we are betrothed: [*Returns to Proteus.*
Nay, more, our marriage hour,
With all the cunning manner of our flight,
Determined of: how I must climb her window,
The ladder made of cords; and all the means
Plotted and 'greed on for my happiness.

Good Proteus, go with me to my chamber
In these affairs to aid me with thy counsel.
Pro. Go on before; I shall inquire you forth;
[*Goes up*, L.
I must unto the road, to disembark
Some necessaries that I needs must use;
And then I'll presently attend you.
Val. Will you make haste?
Pro. I will. [*Exit Valentine rapidly*, L. U. E.
Even as one heat another heat expels,
Or as one nail by strength drives out another,
So the remembrance of my former love
Is by a newer object quite forgotten.
Is it mine eye, or Valentinus' praise,
Her true perfection, or my false transgression,
That makes me, reasonless, to reason thus?
She's fair, and so is Julia, that I love;
That I did love—for now my love is thawed;
And, like a waxen image 'gainst the fire,
Bears no impression of the thing it was.
Methinks, my zeal to Valentine is cold;
And that I love him not, as I was wont:
Oh! but I love his lady too, too much;
And that's the reason I love him so little.
How shall I dote on her with more advice,
That thus, without advice, begin to love her!
'Tis but her picture I have yet beheld,
And that hath dazzled my reason's light;
But when I look on her perfections,
There is no reason but I shall be blind.
If I can check my erring love, I will;
If not, to compass her I'll use my skill. [*Exit*, L.

Enter Speed, R. *and* Launce, L. *Speed appears as if looking for his master; Launce has the dog with him, his staff, and several packages.*

Speed. Launce! by mine honesty, welcome to Milan.
[*They shake hands and come forward.*
Laun. Forswear not thyself, sweet youth; for I am not welcome. I reckon this always—that a man is never undone till he be hanged; nor never welcome to a place, till some certain shot be paid, and the hostess say, welcome.

Speed. Come on, you madcap, I'll to the alehouse with you presently; where, for one shot of fivepence, thou shalt have five thousand welcomes. But, sirrah, how did thy master part with madam Julia? Shall she marry him?

Laun. No.

Speed. How, then? shall he marry her?

Laun. No, neither.

Speed. What, are they broken?

Laun. No; they are both as whole as a fish.

Speed. Why, then, how stands the matter with them?

Laun. Marry, thus; when it stands well with him, it stands well with her.

Speed. What an ass art thou! I understand thee not.

Laun. What a block art thou, that thou canst not! My staff understands me.

Speed. What thou say'st?

Laun. Ay, and what I do, too; look thee, I'll but lean, and my staff understands me.

Speed. It stands under thee, indeed.

Laun. Why, stand under and understand is all one.

Speed. But tell me true, will't be a match?

Laun. Ask my dog: if he say, ay, it will; if he say, no, it will; if he shake his tail, and say nothing, it will.

Speed. The conclusion is, then, that it will.

Laun. Thou shalt never get such a secret from me but by a parable.

Speed. 'Tis well that I get it so. But, Launce, how say'st thou, that my master is become a notable lover?

Laun. I never knew him otherwise.

Speed. I tell thee, my master is become a hot lover.

Laun. I care not though he burn himself in love. If thou wilt go with me to the alehouse, so; if not, thou art a Hebrew, a Jew, and not worth the name of Christian.

[*Going up*, L.

Speed. Why?

Laun. Because thou hast not so much charity in thee as to go to the ale with a Christian; wilt thou go?

Speed. At thy service. [*Exeunt*, L. U. E.

Enter PROTEUS, L.

Pro. To leave my Julia, shall I be forsworn;
To love fair Silvia, shall I be forsworn;

To wrong my friend, I shall be much forsworn;
And even that power, which gave me first my oath,
Provokes me to this threefold perjury;
Love bade me swear, and love bids me forswear.
At first I did adore a twinkling star,
But now I worship a celestial sun.
Unheedful vows may heedfully be broken;
And he wants wit that wants resolvèd will
To learn his wit to exchange the bad for better.—
Fye, fye, unreverend tongue! to call her bad,
Whose sovereignty thou hast so oft preferred
With twenty thousand soul-confirming oaths.
I cannot leave to love, and yet I do;
But there I leave to love, where I should love.
Julia I lose, and Valentine I lose;
If I keep them, I needs must lose myself;
I to myself am dearer than a friend:
For love is still most precious in itself:
And Silvia, witness heaven, that made her fair!
Shows Julia but a swarthy Ethiope.
I will forget that Julia is alive,
Rememb'ring that my love to her is dead;
And Valentine I'll hold an enemy,
Aiming at Silvia as a sweeter friend.
This night he meaneth with a corded ladder,
To climb celestial Silvia's chamber window;
Myself in counsel, his competitor:
Now presently I'll give her father notice
Of their disguising, and pretended flight;
Who, all enraged, will banish Valentine,
For Thurio, he intends, shall wed his daughter:
But, Valentine being gone, I'll quickly cross,
By some sly trick, blunt Thurio's dull proceeding.
Love, lend me wings to make my purpose swift,
As thou hast lent me wit to plot this drift! [*Exit*, L. U. E.

Scene III.—*Verona. Julia's Garden, as before.*

Enter Julia *and* Lucetta, R.

Jul. Counsel, Lucetta! gentle girl, assist me!
And, even in kind love, I do conjure thee,—
Who art the table wherein all my thoughts

Are visibly charáctered and engraved,—
To lesson me; and tell me some good mean,
How, with my honour, I may undertake
A journey to my loving Proteus.
Luc. Alas! the way is wearisome and long.
Jul. A true-devoted pilgrim is not weary
To measure kingdoms with his feeble steps;
Much less shall she, that hath love's wings, to fly;
And when the flight is made to one so dear,
Of such divine perfection, as Sir Proteus.
Luc. Better forbear, till Proteus make return.
Jul. Oh, know'st thou not his looks are my soul's food?
Didst thou but know the inly touch of love,
Thou would'st as soon go kindle fire with snow,
As seek to quench the fire of love with words.
Luc. I do not seek to quench your love's hot fire;
But qualify the fire's extreme rage,
Lest it should burn above the bounds of reason.
Jul. The more thou dam'st it up, the more it burns
The current that with gentle murmur glides,
Thou know'st, being stopped, impatiently doth rage;
But, when his fair course is not hinderèd,
He makes sweet music with the enameled stones
Giving a gentle kiss to every sedge
He overtaketh in his pilgrimage;
And so by many winding nooks he strays,
With willing sport, to the wild ocean.
Then let me go, and hinder not my course:
I'll be as patient as a gentle stream,
Till the last step have brought me to my love;
And there I'll rest, as, after much turmoil,
A blesséd soul doth in Elysium.
Luc. But in what habit will you go along?
Jul. Not like a woman; for I would prevent
The loose encounters of lascivious men:
Gentle Lucetta, fit me with such weeds
As may beseem some well-reputed page.
Luc. Why, then, your ladyship must cut your hair
Jul. No, girl; I'll knit it up in silken strings,
With twenty odd-conceited true-love knots:
To be fantastic, may become a youth
Of greater time than I shall show to be.

But tell me, wench, how will the world repute me,
For undertaking so unstaid a journey?
I fear me, it will make me scandalized.
Luc. If you think so, then stay at home and go not.
Jul. Nay, that I will not.
Luc. Then never dream of infamy, but go.
If Proteus like your journey, when you come,
No matter who's displeased, when you are gone;
I fear me, he will scarce be pleased withal.
Jul. That is the least, Lucetta, of my fear:
A thousand oaths, an ocean of his tears,
And instances as infinite of love,
Warrant me welcome to my Proteus.
Luc. All these are servants to deceitful men.
Jul. Base men, that use them to so base effect!
But truer stars did govern Proteus' birth:
His words are bonds, his oaths are oracles;
His love sincere, his thoughts immaculate;
His tears, pure messengers sent from his heart;
His heart as far from fraud, as heaven from earth.
Luc. Pray heaven he prove so, when you come to him?
Jul. Now, as thou lov'st me, do him not that wrong,
To bear a hard opinion of his truth:
Only deserve my love, by loving him;
And presently go with me to my chamber,
To take a note of what I stand in need of,
To furnish me upon my longing journey.
All that is mine I leave at thy dispose,
My goods, my lands, my reputation;
Only, in lieu thereof, dispatch me hence:
Come, answer not, but to it presently;
I am impatient of my tarriance. [*Exeunt*, L.

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

Scene I.—*Milan. Garden of the Duke's Palace, as before.*

Enter Duke, Thurio, *and* Proteus, R.

Duke. Sir Thurio, give us leave, I pray, awhile;

We have some secrets to confer about. [*Exit Thurio*, L.
Now, tell me, Proteus, what's your will with me?

Pro. (R.) My gracious lord, that which I would discover,
The law of friendship bids me to conceal:
But, when I call to mind your gracious favours
Done to me, undeserving as I am,
My duty pricks me on to utter that,
Which, else, no worldly good should draw from me.
Know, worthy prince, Sir Valentine, my friend,
This night intends to steal away your daughter;
Myself am one made privy to the plot.
I know you have determined to bestow her
On Thurio;
Thus, for my duty's sake, I rather chose
To cross my friend in his intended drift,
Than, by concealing it, heap on your head
A pack of sorrows, which would press you down,
Being unprevented, to a timeless grave.

Duke. (C.) Proteus, I thank thee for thine honest care.
This love of theirs myself have often seen,
Haply, when they have judged me fast asleep;
And oftentimes have purposed to forbid
Sir Valentine her company, and my court:
But, fearing lest my jealous aim might err,
And so, unworthily, disgrace the man,
I gave him gentle looks; thereby to find
That which thyself hath now disclosed to me.
And, that thou mayst perceive my fear of this,
I nightly lodge her in an upper tower,
The key whereof myself have ever kept
And thence she cannot be conveyed away.

Pro. Know, noble lord, they have devised a mean
How he her chamber-window will ascend,
And with a corded ladder fetch her down;
For which the youthful lover now is gone,
And this way comes he with it presently;
Where, if it please you, you may intercept him.
But, good my lord, do it so cunningly,
That my discovery be not aimed at;
For love of you, not hate unto my friend,
Hath made me publisher of this pretence.

Duke. Upon mine honour, he shall never know

That I had any light from thee of this.

Pro. Adieu, my lord; Sir Valentine is coming.

[*Exit*, L.

Enter VALENTINE, R., *with a ladder of ropes under his cloak. The Duke stops him*, R. C.

Duke. (R.) Sir Valentine, whither away so fast?

Val. Please it your grace, there is a messenger
That stays to bear my letters to my friends,
And I am going to deliver them.

[*About to cross, Duke stays him.*

Duke. Be they of much import?

Val. The tenor of them doth but signify
My health, and happy being at your court.

Duke. Nay, then, no matter: stay with me awhile;

[*Brings forward* R. *chair and sits.*

I am to break with thee of some affairs,
That touch me near, wherein thou must be secret.—[*Sits.*
'Tis not unknown to thee, that I have sought
To match my friend, Sir Thurio, to my daughter.

Val. I know it well, my lord; and, sure, the match
Were rich and honourable; besides, the gentleman
Is full of virtue, bounty, worth, and qualities
Beseeming such a wife as your fair daughter:
Cannot your grace win her to fancy him?

Duke. No, trust me; she is peevish, sullen, froward:
Proud, disobedient, stubborn, lacking duty;
And, may I say to thee, this pride of hers,
Upon advice, hath drawn my love from her;
I now am full resolved to take a wife,
And turn her out to who will take her in.

Val. (L. C.) What would your grace have me to do in this?

Duke. There is a lady, sir, in Milan here,
Whom I affect; but she is nice, and coy,
And naught esteems my aged eloquence;
Now, therefore, would I have thee for my tutor—
(For long agone I have forgot to court,
Besides, the fashion of the time is changed;)
How, and which way, I may bestow myself,
To be regarded in her sun-bright eye.

Val. Win her with gifts, if she respect not words.

Dumb jewels often, in their silent kind,
More than quick words do move a woman's mind.

Duke. But she did scorn a present that I sent her.

Val. A woman sometimes scorns what best contents her
Send her another; never give her o'er;
For scorn at first makes after-love the more.
If she do frown, 'tis not in hate of you;
But rather to beget more love in you:
If she do chide, 'tis not to have you gone;
For why, the fools are mad, if left alone.
Take no repulse, whatever she doth say:
For, *get you gone*, she doth not mean, *away:*
Flatter, and praise, commend, extol their graces;
Though ne'er so black, say they have angels' faces.
That man that hath a tongue, I say, is no man,
If with his tongue he cannot win a woman.

Duke. But she, I mean, is promised by her friends
Unto a youthful gentleman of worth,
And kept so closely from resort of men,
That no man hath access by day to her.

Val. Why, then, I would resort to her by night.

Duke. Ay, but the doors be locked, and keys kept safe.

Val. What lets, but one may enter at her window?

Duke. Her chamber is aloft, far from the ground.

Val. Why, then, a ladder, quaintly made of cords,
Would serve to scale another Hero's tower,
So bold Leander would adventure it.

Duke. Now, as thou art a gentleman of blood,
Advise me where I may have such a ladder.

[*Rises and puts back chair*

Val. When would you use it? Pray, sir, tell me that.

Duke. This very night.

Val. By seven o'clock I'll get you such a ladder.

Duke. How shall I best convey the ladder thither?

Val. It will be light, my lord, that you may bear it
Under a cloak, that is of any length.

Duke. As long as thine will serve the turn.

[*Taking hold of Valentine's cloak.*

Val. Ay, my good lord.

Duke. Then let me see thy cloak.

[*Tries to take off cloak—Valentine goes round to* R., *and returns,* L., *by which time the Duke has taken the let-*

ter from the cloak pocket, and thrown the cloak over chair, R.

I'll get me one of such another length.

Val. Why, any cloak will serve the turn, my lord.

Duke. How shall I fashion me to wear a cloak?
I pray thee, let me feel thy cloak upon me. [*Takes cloak.*
What letter is this same? What's here?—*To Silvia.*
And here an engine fit for my proceeding!
[*Takes cord ladder from under Valentine's* L. *arm, and throws it down,* R.
I'll be so bold to break the seal for once. [*Reads.*
My thoughts do harbour with my Silvia nightly,
And slaves they are to me, that send them flying;
Oh, could their master come and go as lightly,
Himself would lodge where senseless they are lying.
My herald thoughts in thy pure bosom rest them:
While I, their king, that thither them importune,
Do curse the grace that with such grace hath blessed them,
Because myself do want my servants' fortune:
I curse myself, for they are sent by me,
That they should harbour where their lord should be.
What's here?
Silvia, this night will I enfranchise thee:
'Tis so; and here's the ladder for the purpose.—
Why, Phaëton (for thou art Merops' son),
Wilt thou aspire to guide the heavenly car,
And with thy daring folly burn the world?
Wilt thou reach stars because they shine on thee?—
Go, base intruder! over-weening slave!
Bestow thy fawning smiles on equal mates;
And think, my patience, more than thy desert,
Is privilege for thy departure hence: [*Crosses,* L.
But, if thou linger in my territories,
Longer than swiftest expedition
Will give thee time to leave our royal court,
By heaven, my wrath shall far exceed the love
I ever bore my daughter, or thyself. [*Val. about to speak.*
Begone,—I will not hear thy vain excuse,—
But, as thou lov'st thy life, make speed from hence.
[*Exit,* L.

Val. And why not death, rather than living torment?
To die, is to be banished from myself;

And Silvia is myself: banished from her,
Is self from self: a deadly banishment!
What light is light, if Silvia be not seen?
What joy is joy, if Silvia be not by?
Unless it be to think that she is by,
And feed upon the shadow of perfection.
Except I be by Silvia in the night,
There is no music in the nightingale;
Unless I look on Silvia in the day,
There is no day for me to look upon:
She is my essence; and I leave to be,
If I be not by her fair influence,
Fostered, illumined, cherished, kept alive.
I fly not death, to fly this deadly doom:
Tarry I here, I but attend on death;
But, fly I hence, I fly away from life.

[*Launce and Proteus without*, R.

Pro. Run, boy, run, run, and seek him out.

Laun. So-ho! So-ho!

Pro. What see'st thou?

Enter Launce *and* Proteus, R.

Laun. Him we go to find: there's not a hair on's head, but 'tis a Valentine.

Pro. Valentine?

Val. No.

Pro. Who then? his spirit?

Val. Neither.

Pro. What then?

Val. Nothing.

Laun. Can nothing speak? Master, shall I strike?

Pro. Whom wouldst thou strike?

Laun. Nothing.

Pro. Villain, forbear! [*Pushing Launce aside.*] Friend Valentine, a word.

Val. My ears are stopped and cannot hear more news,

[*Crosses*, R.

So much of bad already hath possessed them.

Pro. Then, in dumb silence, will I bury mine;
For they are harsh, untunable, and bad.

Val. Is Silvia dead?

Pro. No, Valentine.

Val. Hath she forsworn me?

Pro. No, Valentine.

Val. What is your news?

Laun. (L.) Sir, there's a proclamation that you are banished.

Pro. That thou art banishèd,—Oh, that's the news!
From hence, from Silvia, and from me, thy friend.

Val. Doth Silvia know that I am banishèd?

Pro. (C.) Ay, ay; and she hath offered to the doom,
A sea of melting pearl, which some call tears:
Those at her father's churlish feet she tendered;
With them, upon her knees, her humble self;
But neither bended knees, pure hands held up,
Sad sighs, deep groans, nor silver-shedding tears,
Could penetrate her uncompassionate sire;
But Valentine, if he be ta'en, must die.
Besides, her intercession chafed him so,
When she for thy repeal was suppliant,
That to close prison he commanded her,
With many bitter threats of biding there.

Val. (C.) No more; unless the next word that thou speak'st
Have some malignant power upon my life:
If so, I pray thee, breathe it in mine ear,
As ending anthem of my endless dolour.

Pro. Cease to lament for that thou canst not help,
And study help for that which thou lament'st:
Time is the nurse and breeder of all good.
Here if thou stay, thou canst not see thy love;
Besides, thy staying will abridge thy life.
Hope is a lover's staff; walk hence with that,
And manage it against despairing thoughts.
Thy letters may be here, though thou art hence;
Which, being writ to me, shall be delivered
Even in the milk-white bosom of thy love.
The time now serves not to expostulate:
Come, I'll convey thee through the city gate;
[*Crosses*, L., *and takes Valentine's hand.*
And, ere I part with thee, confer at large
Of all that may concern thy love-affairs:
As thou lov'st Silvia, though not for thyself,
Regard thy danger, and along with me.

Val. [*Crosses,* L., *with Proteus as he speaks.*] I pray thee, Launce, an if thou see'st my man,
Bid him make haste, and meet me at the north-gate.

Pro. Go, sirrah, find him out. Come, Valentine.

[*Exeunt Valentine and Proteus,* L.

Laun. I am but a fool, look you; and yet I have the wit to think my master is a kind of knave:—but that's all one if he be but one knave. He lives not now, that knows me to be in love: yet I am in love; but a team of horse shall not pluck that from me; nor who 'tis I love, and yet 'tis a woman. She hath more qualities than a water-spaniel, which is much in a bare Christian.—Here is the cat-log [*Taking out a paper,*] of her conditions. Imprimis, *She can fetch and carry.*—Why, a horse can do no more; nay, a horse cannot fetch, but only carry; therefore is she better than a jade. Item,—*She can milk:* look you, a sweet virtue in a maid with clean hands.

Enter SPEED, R.

Speed. How now, Signior Launce? What news?

Laun. The blackest news that ever thou heard'st.

Speed. (R.) Why, man, how black?

Laun. Why, as black as ink.

Speed. Let me read them.

Laun. (L.) Fie on thee, jolt-head; thou canst not read.

Speed. Thou liest: I can.

Laun. I will try thee: tell me this:—Who begot thee?

Speed. Marry, the son of my grandfather.

Laun. Oh, illiterate loiterer! it was the son of thy grandmother: this proves that thou canst not read.

Speed. Come, fool, come: try me in thy paper.

Laun. [*Gives him the paper.*] There; and St. Nicholas be thy speed!

Speed. [*Reads.*] Imprimis, *She can milk.*

Laun. Ay, that she can.

Speed. Item, *She brews good ale.*

Laun. And thereof comes the proverb,—Blessing of your heart, you brew good ale.

Speed. Item, *She can sew:*—

Laun. That's as much as to say, Can she so?

Speed. Item, *She can knit:*—

Laun. What need a man care for a stock with a wench, when she can knit him a stock?

Speed. Item, *She can wash and scour.*

Laun. A special virtue; for then she need not be washed and scoured.

Speed. Item, *She hath many nameless virtues.*

Laun. That's as much as to say, bastard virtues; that, indeed, know not their fathers, and therefore have no names.

Speed. Here follows her vices.

Laun. Close at the heels of her virtues.

Speed. Item, *She is not to be kissed fasting, in respect of her breath.*

Laun. Well, that fault may be mended with a breakfast Read on.

Speed. Item, *She hath a sweet mouth.*

Laun. That makes amends for sour breath.

Speed. Item, *She doth talk in her sleep.*

Laun. It's no matter for that, so she sleep not in her talk.

Speed. Item, *She is slow in words.*

Laun. Oh, villain, that set this down among her vices! To be slow in words, is a woman's only virtue: out with't; and place it for her chief virtue.

Speed. Item, *She is proud.*

Laun. Out with that, too; it was Eve's legacy, and cannot be ta'en from her.

Speed. Item, *She hath no teeth.*

Laun. I care not for that, neither, because I love crusts.

Speed. Item, *She is curst.*

Laun. Well; the best is, she hath no teeth to bite.

Speed. She will often praise her liquor.

Laun. If her liquor be good, she shall: if she will not, I will; for good things should be praised. Well, proceed.

Speed. Item, *she hath more hair than wit, more faults than hairs, and more wealth than faults.*

Laun. Stop there; I'll have her: she was mine, and not mine, twice or thrice in that last article: rehearse that once more.

Speed. Item, *She hath more hair than wit,*—

Laun. More hair than wit—it may be; I'll prove it: the cover of the salt hides the salt, and therefore it is more than the salt; the hair that covers the wit, is more than the wit; for the greater hides the less. What's next?

Speed. *And more faults than hairs,—*

Laun. That's monstrous: oh, that that were out.

Speed. *And more wealth than faults.*

Laun. Why, that word makes the faults gracious: well, I'll have her: and, if it be a match [*Takes paper*], as nothing is impossible,—

Speed. What then?

Laun. Why, then, I will tell thee—that thy master stays for thee at the north gate.

Speed. For me?

Laun. For thee? Ay, who art thou? He hath stayed for a better man than thee.

Speed. And I must go to him?

Laun. Thou must run to him; for thou hast staid so long, that going will scarce serve the turn.

Speed. Why didst not tell me sooner? Plague of your love-letters! [*Exit*, L.

Laun. Ha! ha! ha! Now will he be swinged for reading my letter; an unmannerly slave, that will thrust himself into secrets! I'll after, to rejoice in the boy's correction. [*Exit*, L.

SCENE II.—*A Forest near Mantua.*

OUTLAWS *enter cautiously* R., *and when* C., 1*st Outlaw enters to them, and speaks.*

1*st Out.* Fellows, stand fast; I see a passenger.

2*d Out.* If there be ten, shrink not, but down with them

[*Outlaws retire quickly, and as Val. enters with Speed, they re-enter and surround them.*

Enter VALENTINE *and* SPEED, L.

3 *Out.* (L.) Stand, sir, and throw us that you have about you,
If not, we'll make you sit, and rifle you.

Speed. Sir, we are undone! these are the villains
That all the travellers do fear so much.

Val. My friends—

1*st Out.* That's not so, sir: we are your enemies

2*d Out.* Peace: we'll hear him.

3*d Out.* Ay, by my beard, will we:
For he's a proper man.

Val. Then know, that I have little wealth to lose;
A man I am, crossed with adversity;
My riches are these poor habiliments,
Of which if you should here disfurnish me,
You take the sum and substance that I have.

2*d Out.* Whither travel you?

Val. To Verona.

1*st Out.* Whence came you?

Val. From Milan.

3*d Out.* How long have you sojourned there?

Val. Some sixteen months; and longer might have staid,
If crookéd fortune had not thwarted me.

1*st Out.* What, were you banished thence?

Val. I was.

2*d Out.* For what offence?

Val. For that which now torments me to rehearse.
I killed a man, whose death I much repent;
But yet I slew him manfully in fight,
Without false vantage, or base treachery.

1*st Out.* Why, ne'er repent it, if it were done so.
[*Signs to the others,* R., *who cross behind Val. to him.*
But were you banished for so small a fault?

Val. I was, and held me glad of such a doom.

3*d Out.* By the bare scalp of Robin Hood's fat friar,
This fellow were a king for our wild faction!

1*st Out.* We'll have him: Sirs, a word.
[*All go forward,* R. *and* L.

Speed. [*Crossing behind to Val.,* R.] Master, be one of them;
It is an honourable kind of thievery.

Val. Peace, villain!

2*d Out.* (R). Tell us this: Have you anything to take to?

Val. Nothing, but my fortune.

1*st Out.* (L.) Know, then, that some of us are gentlemen,
Such as the fury of ungoverned youth
Thrust from the company of awful men;
But to the purpose: seeing you are beautified
With goodly shape, and, by your own report,
A man of such perfection
As we do in our quality much want,—

2*d Out.* Indeed, because you are a banished man,
Therefore, above the rest, we parley to you:

Are you content to be our general?
To make a virtue of necessity,
And live, as we do, in this wilderness?
3d Out. (R.) What say'st thou? wilt thou be of our consort?
Say, ay, and be the captain of us all;
We'll do thee homage, and be ruled by thee,
Love thee as our commander and our king.
1st Out. But if thou scorn our courtesy, thou diest.
2d Out. Thou shalt not live to brag what we have offered.
Val. I take your offer, and will live with you;
[*A gesture of satisfaction among the Outlaws.*
Provided that you do no outrages
On silly women, or poor passengers.
3d Out. No, we detest such vile base practices.
Come, go with us, we'll bring thee to our crews,
And show thee all the treasure we have got;
Which, with ourselves, all rest at thy dispose.
All. [*Crowding around Val. and waving their caps.*] Ay, ay, ay!

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Milan.—Part of Palace and Street by moonlight—a stone seat,* R.

Enter PROTEUS, L. U. E

Pro. Already have I been false to Valentine,
And now I must be as unjust to Thurio.
Under the colour of commending him,
I have access my own love to prefer;
But Silvia is too true, too fair, too holy,
To be corrupted with my worthless gifts.
When I protest true loyalty to her,
She twits me with my falsehood to my friend;
When to her beauty I commend my vows,
She bids me think, how I have been forsworn

In breaking faith with Julia whom I loved.
Yet, spaniel-like, the more she spurns my love,
The more it grows, and fawneth on her still.
But here comes Thurio: now must we to her window,
And give some evening music to her ear.

Enter Thurio, *and Six Musicians, carrying lutes,* L.

Thu. How now, Sir Proteus? are you crept before us?

Pro. (R.) Ay, gentle Thurio; for you know that love
Will creep in service where it cannot go.

Thu. (L.) Ay; but I hope, sir, that you love not here.

Pro. Sir, but I do: or else I would be hence.

Thu. Whom? Silvia?

Pro. Ay, Silvia—for your sake.

Thu. I thank you for your own. Now, gentlemen,
Let's tune, and to it lustily awhile.

Enter, at a distance, Host, and Julia *in boy's clothes,* L.U.E.

Host. Now, my young guest, methinks you're allycholy:
I pray you, why is it?

Jul. Marry, mine host, because I cannot be merry.

Host. Come, we'll have you merry:—I'll bring you where you shall hear music, and see the gentleman that you asked for.

Jul. But shall I hear him speak?

Host. Ay, that you shall.

Jul. That will be music. [*Musicians tune their lutes.*

Host. Hark! hark!

Jul. Is he among these?

Host. Ay; but peace—let's hear 'em.

[*During the song Julia looks timidly at the faces of the Serenaders, going to Proteus last—on recognizing him, she retires sorrowful,* L.

QUINTETTO.

Who is Silvia? What is she,
That all our swains commend her?
Holy, fair, and wise is she;
The heavens such grace did lend her
That she might admired be.

Is she kind, as she is fair?
For beauty lives with kindness;—

Love doth to her eyes repair,
To help him of his blindness;
And, being helped, inhabits there.

Host. How now? Are you sadder than you were before? How do you do, man? the music likes you not.

Jul. You mistake—the musician likes me not.

Host. Why, my pretty youth?

Jul. He plays false, father.

Host. How? out of tune on the strings?

Jul. Not so: but yet so false, that he grieves my very heart.

Host. I perceive you delight not in music.

Jul. Not a whit, when it jars so.—

[*Symphony of Second Part commences.*

Host. Hark, what fine change is in the music!

Jul. Ay, that change is the spite.

Host. You would have them always play but one thing?

Jul. I would always have *one* play but one thing.

SECOND PART.

Then to Silvia let us sing,
That Silvia is excelling;
She excels each mortal thing
Upon the dull earth dwelling:
To her let us garlands bring.

Jul. But, host, doth this Sir Proteus, that we talk on, often resort unto this gentlewoman?

Host. I tell you what Launce, his man, told me—he loved her out of all nick.

Jul. Where is Launce?

Host. Gone to seek his dog; which, to-morrow, by his master's command, he must carry for a present to his lady.

[*During this Pro. and Thur. have given money to the Musicians, who now exeunt,* L.

Jul. Peace! stand aside! the company parts.

Pro. Sir Thurio, fear not you! I will so plead
That you shall say my cunning drift excels.

Thu. Where meet we? [*Crosses to* R.

Pro. At St. Gregory's well.

Thu. Farewell. [*Exit,* R.

Silvia *appears above at a window*, R.

Pro. Madam, good even to your ladyship.

[*The Host sits down*, L., *and falls asleep. Julia listens* 1 E. L., *on hearing Silvia's voice.*

Sil. I thank you for your music, gentlemen :
Who is that, that spake ?

Pro. One, lady, if you knew his pure heart's truth,
You'd quickly learn to know him by his voice.

Jul. Sir Proteus, as I take it.

Pro. Sir Proteus, gentle lady, and your servant.

Sil. Thou subtle, perjured, false, disloyal man !
Think'st thou I am so shallow, so conceitless,
To be seducéd by thy flattery,
That hast deceived so many with thy vows ?
Return, return, and make thy love amends.
For me—by this pale queen of night I swear,
I am so far from granting thy request,
That I despise thee for thy wrongful suit :
And, by and by, intend to chide myself
Even for this time I spend in talking to thee.

Pro. I grant, sweet love, that I did love a lady—
But she is dead.

Jul. [*Aside.*] I am sure she is not buried.

Sil. Say that she be ; yet, Valentine, thy friend,
Survives ; to whom, thyself art witness
I am betrothed ; and art thou not ashamed
To wrong him with thy importunacy ?

Pro. I likewise hear, that Valentine is dead.

Sil. And so, suppose, am I ; for in his grave,
Assure thyself, my love is buried.

Pro. Madam, if your heart be so obdurate
Vouchsafe me yet your picture for my love,
The picture that is hanging in your chamber.
To that I'll speak, to that I'll sigh and weep,
And to your shadow I will make true love.

Sil. I am very loath to be your idol, sir ;
But, since your falsehood shall become you well
To worship shadows, and adore false shapes,
Send to me in the morning, and I'll send it.
And so, good rest. [*Exit Silvia*, R.

Pro. As wretches have o'er night,
That wait for execution in the morn. [*Exit*, L.

Jul. Host, will you go?

Host. By my hallidom, I was fast asleep. [*Rises.*

Jul. Pray you, where lies Sir Proteus?

Host. Marry, at my house. Trust me, I think 'tis almost day.

Jul. Not so; but it hath been the longest night
That e'er I watched, and the most heaviest. [*Exeunt*, L.

Enter Eglamour, L. U. E.

Egl. This is the hour that madam Silvia
Entreated me to call, and know her mind.
Madam! madam!

Silvia *appears above at the window*, R.

Sil. Who calls?

Egl. One that attends your ladyship's command.

Sil. Sir Eglamour, a thousand times good morrow!

Egl. I am thus early come, to know what service
It is your pleasure to command me in.

Sil. Oh, Eglamour,
Thou art not ignorant what dear good will
I bear unto the banished Valentine;
Nor how my father would enforce me marry
Vain Thurio, whom my very soul abhorred.
Thyself hast loved; and I have heard thee say,
No grief did ever come so near thy heart,
As when thy lady and thy true-love died,
Upon whose grave thou vowd'st pure chastity.
Sir Eglamour, I would to Valentine,
To Mantua, where, I hear, he makes abode;
And, for the ways are dangerous to pass,
I do desire thee, even from a heart
As full of sorrows as the sea of sands,
To bear me company, and go with me:
If not, to hide what I have said to thee,
That I may venture to depart alone.

Egl. Madam, I pity much your grievances,
Which, since I know they virtuously are placed,
I give consent to go along with you;
Recking as little what betideth me,
As much I wish all good befortune you.—
When will you go?

Sil. This evening coming.
Egl. Where shall I meet you?
Sil. At friar Patrick's cell.
Egl. I will not fail your ladyship!
Good morrow, gentle lady. [*Exit*, L.
Sil. Good morrow, kind Sir Eglamour. [*Exit*, R.

Scene II.—*The same as Scene I., Act II.*

Enter Launce *with his dog and staff, through arch*, R.

Laun. When a man's servant shall play the cur with him, look you, it goes hard: one that I brought up of a puppy; one that I saved from drowning, when three or four of his blind brothers and sisters went to it! I have taught him, even as one would say, precisely, Thus I would teach a dog. I was sent to deliver him as a present to Mistress Silvia, from my master; and I came no sooner into the dining-chamber, but he steps me to her trencher, and steals her capon's leg. Oh, 'tis a foul thing when a cur cannot keep himself in all companies! I would have, as one should say, one that takes upon him to be a dog indeed, to be, as it were, a dog at all things. If I had not had more wit than he, to take a fault upon me that he did, I think verily he had been hanged for't; sure, as I live, he had suffered for't. You shall judge: he thrusts himself into the company of three or four gentlemanlike dogs, under the duke's table; he had not been there a while, but all the chamber smelt him. *Out with the dog*, says one;—*What cur is that?* says another;—*Whip him out*, says the third;—*Hang him up*, says the duke. I knew it was Crab, and goes me to the fellow that whips the dogs. Friend, quoth I, you mean to whip the dog?—Ay, marry, do I, quoth he.—You do him the more wrong, quoth I; 'twas I did the thing you wot of. He makes me no more ado, but whips me out of the chamber. How many masters would do this for their servant? Nay, I'll be sworn, I have sat in the stocks for puddings he hath stolen, otherwise he had been executed: I have stood on the pillory for geese he hath killed, otherwise he had suffered for it: thou think'st not of this now! Nay, I remember the trick you served me, when I took my leave of Madam Silvia: did I not bid thee still mark me, and do as I do? When didst thou ever see me do such a trick?

Enter PROTEUS *and* JULIA *in boy's clothes*, R. F.

Pro. (R.) Sebastian is thy name? I like thee well,
And will employ thee in some service presently.
[*Julia retires a little*, R.
How now, you idle knave?
Where have you been these two days, loitering?

Laun. Marry, sir, I carried Mistress Silvia the dog you bade me.

Pro. And what says she to my little jewel?

Laun. Marry, she says your dog was a cur; and tells you, currish thanks is good enough for such a present.

Pro. But she received my dog?

Laun. No, indeed, she did not: here have I brought him back again.

Pro. What, didst thou offer her this from me?

Laun. Ay, sir; the other squirrel was stolen from me by the hangman's boys in the market-place, and then I offered her mine own; who is a dog as big as ten of yours, and therefore the gift the greater.

Pro. Go, get thee hence, and find my dog again,
[*Drives dog with Launce round the Stage and off*, R. F.
Or ne'er return again into my sight.
Away, I say; stay'st thou to vex me here?

Laun. Crab. [*Exit with his dog*, R. F.

Pro. A slave that, still an end, turns me to shame!
[*Julia advances*, L.
Sebastian, I have entertained thee,
Partly, that I have need of such a youth,
That can with some discretion do my business,
For 'tis no trusting to yon foolish lout:
But, chiefly, for thy face and thy behaviour.
Go presently, and take this ring with thee;
[*Gives her a ring.*
Deliver it to Madam Silvia.—
She loved me well, delivered it to me.

Jul. (L.) It seems you loved her not, to leave her token·
She's dead, belike.

Pro. (R.) Not so; I think she lives.

Jul. Alas! I cannot choose but pity her

Pro. Wherefore shouldst thou pity her?

Jul. Because methinks that she loved you as well

As you do love your Lady Silvia:
She dreams on him that hath forgot her love;
You dote on her that cares not for your love.
'Tis pity love should be so contrary;
And thinking on it makes me cry, alas!

Pro. Well, give her that ring, and therewithal
[*Gives letter.*
This letter: that's her chamber: tell my lady
I claim the promise for her heavenly picture.
Thy message done, hie home unto my chamber,
Where thou shalt find me sad and solitary. [*Exit,* R.

Jul. How many women would do such a message?
This ring I gave him, when he parted from me,
To bind him to remember my good will:
And now am I (unhappy messenger),
To plead for that which I would not obtain;
To carry that which I would have refused—
To praise his face, which I would have dispraised.
I am my master's true confirméd love,
But cannot be true servant to my master,
Unless I prove false traitor to myself:
Yet will I woo for him; but yet so coldly,
As, heaven, it knows, I would not have him speed.
[*Crosses,* L.

Enter SILVIA, *attended by* URSULA *and three ladies from door,* L. *The Ladies remain on staircase—Ursula at the top, near the door.*

(R.) Gentlewoman, good day! I pray you, be my mean
To bring me where to speak with Madam Silvia.

Sil. What would you with her, if that I be she?

Jul. If you be she, I do entreat your patience
To hear me speak the message I am sent on.

Sil. From whom?

Jul. From my master, Sir Proteus, madam.

Sil. Oh!—he sends for a picture?

[*Signs to Ursula, who goes off, and returns immediately with picture. All the Ladies descend, and Ursula gives picture to Silvia.*

Jul. Ay, madam.

Sil. Ursula, bring my picture, then.
Go, give your master this. [*Gives her the picture.*

Tell him from me,
One Julia, that his changing thoughts forget,
Would better fit his chamber than this shadow.
Jul. Madam, please you, peruse this letter.
[*Takes a letter from her bosom and gives it.*
Pardon me, madam, I have unadvised
Delivered you a paper that I should not. [*Retaking it.*
This is the letter to your ladyship. [*Gives Proteus' letter.*
Sil. I pray thee, let me look on that again.
Jul. It may not be; good madam, pardon me.
Sil. There, hold.
I will not look upon your master's lines.
I know they are stuffed with protestations, [*Tears letter*
And full of new-found oaths, which he will break
As easily as I do tear this paper.
Jul. Madam, he sends your ladyship this ring.
Sil. The more shame for him that he sends it me;
For I have heard him say a thousand times,
His Julia gave it him at his departure:
Though his false finger hath profaned the ring,
Mine shall not do his Julia so much wrong.
Jul. She thanks you.
Sil. What say'st thou?
Jul. I thank you, madam, that you tender her.—
Poor gentlewoman! my master wrongs her much.
Sil. Dost thou know her?
Jul. Almost as well as I do know myself.
Sil. Is she not passing fair?
Jul. She hath been fairer, madam, than she is:
When she did think my master loved her well,
She, in my judgment, was as fair as you;
But, since she did neglect her looking-glass,
And threw her sun-expelling mask away,
The air hath starved the roses in her cheeks,
And pinched the lily tincture of her face;
That now she is become as black as I.
Sil. How tall was she?
Jul. About my stature: for, at Pentecost,
When all our pageants of delight were played,
Our youth got me to play the woman's part,
And I was trimmed in Madam Julia's gown;
Which served me as a fit, by all men's judgment,

As if the garment had been made for me:
Therefore, I know she is about my height:
And, at that time, I made her weep a-good,
For I did play a lamentable part:
Madam, 'twas Ariadne, passioning
For Theseus' perjury, and unjust flight;
Which I so lively acted with my tears,
That my poor mistress, movéd therewithal,
Wept bitterly; and, would I might be dead,
If I in thought felt not her very sorrow.

Sil. She is beholden to thee, gentle youth!—
Alas! poor lady! desolate and left! [*Crosses*, R.
I weep myself to think upon thy words.
Here, youth,—there is my purse: I give thee this
For thy sweet mistress' sake, because thou lov'st her.
Farewell.

Jul. And she shall thank you for't, if e'er you know her.
[*Exeunt Silvia and Ladies*, R.
A virtuous gentlewoman, mild, and beautiful.
Here is her picture:—Let me see:—I think,
If I had such a tire, this face of mine
Were full as lovely as is this of hers:
Her hair is auburn, mine is perfect yellow:
Her eyes are gray as glass; and so are mine;
Ay, but her forehead's low, and mine's as high.
What should it be, that he respects in her,
But I can make respective in myself,
If this fond love were not a blinded god?—
Oh, thou senseless form,
Thou shalt be worshipped, kissed, loved, and adored;
And, were there sense in his idolatry,
My substance should be statue in thy stead.
I'll use thee kindly for thy mistress' sake,
That used me so; or else, by Jove, I vow, [*Goes up*, R.
I should have scratched out your unseeing eyes,
To make my master out of love with thee. [*Exit*, R. F.

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

Scene I.—*Same as preceding.*

Enter Thurio, L., Proteus, *and* Julia *still disguised,* R.

Thu. Sir Proteus, what says Silvia to my suit?

Pro. (R.) Oh, sir, I find her milder than she was: And yet, she takes exceptions at your person.

Thu. What, that my leg is too long!

Pro. No; that it is too little.

Thu. (L.) I'll wear a boot, to make it somewhat rounder. What says she to my face?

Pro. She says it is a fair one.

Thu. Nay, then the wanton lies; my face is black.

Pro. But pearls are fair; and the old saying is, Black men are pearls in beauteous ladies' eyes.

Jul. 'Tis true; such pearls as put out ladies' eyes; For I had rather wink than look on them. [*Aside.*

Thu. How likes she my discourse?

Pro. Ill, when you talk of war.

Thu. But well, when I discourse of love and peace?

Jul. [*Aside.*] But better, may be, when you hold your peace.

Thu. What says she to my birth?

Pro. That you are well derived.

Jul. [*Aside.*] True, from a gentleman to a fool.

Thu. Considers she my possessions?

Pro. Oh, ay, and pities them.

Thu. Wherefore?

Jul. [*Aside.*] That such an ass should own them.

Pro. That they are out by lease.

Jul. Here comes the Duke.

Enter Duke, *hastily,* R.

Duke. How now, Sir Proteus? how now, Thurio? Which of you saw Sir Eglamour of late?

Thu. Not I.

Pro. Nor I.

Duke. Saw you my daughter?

Pro. Neither.

Duke. Why, then, she's fled unto that peasant, Valentine,

And Eglamour is in her company.
'Tis true; for friar Lawrence met them both,
As he in penance wandered through the forest:
Him he knew well, and guessed that it was she;
But, being masked, he was not sure of it:
Besides, she did intend confession
At Patrick's cell this even; and there she was not:
These likelihoods confirm her flight from hence;
Therefore, I pray you, stand not to discourse, [*Goes up*, R.
But mount you presently, and meet with me
Upon the rising of the mountain-foot
That leads towards Mantua, whither they are fled:
Despatch, sweet gentlemen, and follow me. [*Exit*, R.

Thu. Why, this it is to be a peevish girl,
That flies her fortune, when it follows her!—
I'll after, more to be revenged on Eglamour,
Than for the love of reckless Silvia. [*Exit*, R.

Pro. And I will follow, more for Silvia's love,
Than hate of Eglamour, that goes with her. [*Exit*, R.

Jul. And I will follow, more to cross that love,
Than hate for Silvia, that is gone for love. [*Exit*, R.

SCENE II.—*Frontiers of Mantua. The Forest. A cave and bank. A clashing of swords heard—then voices.*

Enter SILVIA, *and* 1*st*, 2*d*, *and* 3*d Outlaws.*

2*d Out.* Come, come;
Be patient, we must bring you to our captain.

Sil. (R.) A thousand more mischances than this one
Have learned me how to brook this patiently.

2*d Out.* Come, bring her away.

1*st Out.* (L.) Where is the gentleman that was with her?

3*d Out.* Being nimble-footed, he hath outrun us,
But Moyses and Valerius follow him.
Go thou with her to the west end of the wood: [*Crosses*, R
There is our captain: we'll follow him that's fled;
The thicket is beset; he cannot 'scape.

1*st Out.* [*Crosses*, R.] Come, I must bring you to our captain's care;
Fear not; he bears an honourable mind,
And will not use a woman lawlessly.

Sil. Oh, Valentine, this I endure for thee. [*Exeunt*, R

SCENE III.—*Another part of the Forest.* VALENTINE *discovered, seated on a bank—his hat, weapons, &c., by his side.*

Val. How use doth breed a habit in a man!
This shadowy desert, unfrequented woods,
I better brook than flourishing peopled towns:
Here I can sit alone, unseen of any,
And to the nightingale's complaining notes,
Tune my distresses, and record my woes.
Oh, thou that dost inhabit in my breast,
Leave not the mansion so long tenantless,
Lest, growing ruinous, the building fall,
And leave no memory of what it was!
Repair me with thy presence, Silvia!
[*A great noise of whistling and shouting without,* L.
What halloing and what stir is this to-day?
[*Takes up his hat, &c.*
These are my mates, that make their wills their law,
Have some unhappy passenger in chase:—
They love me well, yet I have much to do,
To keep them from uncivil outrages.
Withdraw thee, Valentine; who's this comes here?
[*Steps aside into cave.*

Enter PROTEUS, SILVIA, *and* JULIA, R.

Pro. Madam, this service I have done for you
(Though you respect not aught your servant doth),
To hazard life, and rescue you from him
That would have forced your life and honour from you.

Re-enter VALENTINE.

Vouchsafe me, for my meed, but one fair look;
A smaller boon than this I cannot beg,
And less than this I am sure you cannot give.
Val. [*Aside.*] How like a dream is this I see and hear!
Love, lend me patience to forbear awhile.
Sil. (R.) Oh, miserable, unhappy that I am!
Pro. (L.) Unhappy were you, madam, ere I came;
But, by my coming, I have made you happy.
Sil. By thy approach thou mak'st me most unhappy

Jul. (*Aside*, L. C.) And me, when he approacheth to your presence.

Sil. Had I been seized on by a hungry lion,
I would have been a breakfast to the beast,
Rather than have false Proteus rescue me.
O Heaven, be judge how I love Valentine,
Whose life's as tender to me as my soul;
And full as much,—for more there cannot be,—
I do detest false, perjured Proteus;
Therefore, begone, solicit me no more.

Pro. What dangerous action, stood it next to death,
Would I not undergo for one calm look?
Oh, 'tis the curse of love, and still approved,
When women cannot love, where they're beloved.

Sil. When Proteus cannot love where he's beloved:
Read over Julia's heart, thy first, best love,
For whose dear sake thou didst then rend thy faith
Into a thousand oaths; and all those oaths
Descended into perjury, to love me.
Thou counterfeit to thy true friend!

Pro. In love,
Who respects friend?

Sil. All men but Proteus.

Pro. Nay, if the gentle spirit of moving words
Can no way change you to a milder form,
I'll woo you, like a soldier, at arms' end;
And love you 'gainst the nature of love, force you.

[*Seizes her, but when Val. speaks, he goes* R., *draws his sword, and rushes forward to strike, when, recognizing his friend, he staggers back,* R., *and drops his sword.*

Sil. Oh, heaven!

Val. Ruffian, let go that rude, uncivil touch;
Thou friend of an ill fashion!

Pro. Valentine!

Val. Thou common friend, that's without faith or love;
Thou hast beguiled my hopes; naught but mine eye
Could have persuaded me: Now I dare not say,
I have one friend alive; thou would'st disprove me.
Who should be trusted now, when one's right hand
Is perjured to the bosom? Proteus,
I am sorry I must never trust thee more,
But count the world a stranger for thy sake.

The private wound is deepest. Oh, time, most curst!
'Mongst all foes, that a friend should be the worst.
Pro. My shame and guilt confound me.—
Forgive me, Valentine; if hearty sorrow
Be a sufficient ransom for offence, [*Kneels to Val.*
I tender it here; I do as truly suffer,
As e'er I did commit.
Val. Then I am paid; [*Raises and embraces Pro.*
And once again I do receive thee honest:—
Who by repentance is not satisfied,
Is nor of heaven, nor earth; for these are pleased;
By penitence the Eternal's wrath's appeased:—
And, that my love may appear plain and free,
All that was mine in Silvia, I give thee.
[*Takes the hands of Silvia and Protcus, and puts Proteus across to Silvia,* L. *As Julia faints, Valentine catches her.*
Jul. (R.) Oh, me, unhappy!
Pro. Look to the boy.
Val. Why, boy! why, wag! how now? what is the matter?
Look up; speak.
Jul. Oh, good sir, my master charged me
To deliver a ring to Madam Silvia;
Which, out of my neglect, was never done.
Pro. Where is that ring, boy?
Jul. [*Gives ring to Val. who hands it to Pro.*] Here 'tis; this is it.
Pro. How! let me see:
Why, this is the ring I gave to Julia.
Jul. Oh, cry you mercy, sir, I have mistook;
This is the ring you sent to Silvia. [*Shows another ring.*
Pro. But how cam'st thou by this ring? at my depart,
I gave this unto Julia.
Jul. And Julia herself did give it me;
And Julia herself hath brought it hither.
Pro. How! Julia!
Jul. Behold her that gave aim to all thy oaths,
And entertained them deeply in her heart:
How oft hast thou with perjury cleft the root!
[*Sil. and Val. go up a little.*
O Proteus, let this habit make thee blush!

Be thou ashamed, that I have took upon me
Such an immodest raiment, if shame live
In a disguise of love.
It is the lesser blot, modesty finds,
Women to change their shapes, than men their minds.
Pro. Than men their minds! 'tis true! O Heaven, were man
But constant, he were perfect: that one error
Fills him with faults; makes him run through all sins;
Inconstancy falls off, ere it begins.
Val. Come, come, a hand from either: [*Joins their hands.*
Let me be blest to make this happy close;
'Twere pity two such friends should be long foes.
Pro. Bear witness, Heaven, I have my wish for ever!
Jul. And I have mine. [*All go up.*

Enter all the Outlaws, *with* Duke *and* Thurio, L.

Out. A prize! a prize! a prize!
Val. [*Advances hastily to release the Duke.*] Forbear, I say! it is my lord the Duke.
Your grace is welcome to a man disgraced—
The banished Valentine.
Duke. (L. C.) Sir Valentine!
Thu. (L.) Yonder is Silvia, and Silvia's mine.
Val. (C.) Thurio, give back, or else embrace thy death!
Come not within the measure of my wrath:
Do not name Silvia thine; if once again,
Milan shall not behold thee. Here she stands,—
Take but possession of her with a touch;—
I dare thee but to breathe upon my love.
Thu. Sir Valentine, I care not for her, I;
I hold him but a fool, that will endanger
His body for a girl that loves him not:
I claim her not, and therefore she is thine.
Duke. The more degenerate and base art thou,
To make such means for her as thou hast done,
And leave her on such slight conditions.
Now, by the honour of my ancestry,
I do applaud thy spirit, Valentine,
And think thee worthy of an empress' love.
Know, then, I here forget all former griefs,
Cancel all grudge, repeal thee home again.

Thou art a gentleman, and well derived—
Take thou thy Silvia, for thou hast deserved her.
Val. I thank your grace: the gift hath made me happy.
I now beseech you, for your daughter's sake,
To grant one boon that I shall ask of you.
Duke. I grant it, for thine own, whate'er it be.
Val. These banished men, that I have kept withal,
Are men endued with worthy qualities;
Forgive them what they have committed here,
And let them be recallèd from their exile;
They are reformêd, civil, full of good,
And fit for great employment, worthy lord.
Duke. Thou hast prevailed: I pardon them, and thee;
Dispose of them, as thou know'st their deserts.
Come, let us go: we will include all jars
With triumphs, mirth, and rare solemnity.
Val. And, as we walk along, I dare be bold
With our discourse to make your grace to smile:
What think you of this page, my lord? [*Takes Jul.'s hand.*
Duke. I think the boy hath grace in him: he blushes.
Val. I warrant you, my lord, more grace than boy.
[*Pro. in dumb show entreats Val. to silence.*
Duke. What mean you by that saying?
Val. Please you, I'll tell you as we pass along.
That you will wonder what hath fortunêd.
Come, Proteus: 'tis your penance, but to hear
The story of your loves discoverêd;
That done, our day of marriage shall be yours—
One feast, one house, one mutual happiness.

DISPOSITION OF THE CHARACTERS AT THE FALL OF THE CURTAIN.

OUTLAWS.

JUL. PRO. SILV. VAL. DUKE. THU.

THE END.

No. XXX.

MODERN STANDARD DRAMA.

EDITED BY EPES SARGENT,

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A Comedy

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY GEORGE COLMAN.

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WM. TAYLOR & CO., No. 2 ASTOR HOUSE.

AND JARVIS BUILDINGS, NORTH ST., BALTIMORE.

BOSTON:—REDDING AND COMPANY, 8 STATE STREET.

PHILADELPHIA:—G. B. ZEIBER AND CO., 3 LEDGER BUILDING.

NEW ORLEANS:—J. C. MORGAN, AND JOHN SLY.

1846.

PRICE 12 1-2 CENTS.

EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION.

The "Jealous Wife" was written by the elder George Colman in his twenty-seventh year. It was his first, and most successful comedy; and was originally acted at Drury Lane the 12th of February, 1760. Richard Cumberland, who was present at this representation, says, it was rather coldly received until that scene in the last act, where *Mrs. Oakly*, starting up from her hysterical fit, accosts her husband with—"Oh, you monster! you villain! you base man! would you let me die for want of help? would you?" The celebrated Mrs. Pritchard, who was performing the part, threw new life into the play in this moment of her pretended revivification; and "it has lived ever since."

If the comedy did not make a favourable impression upon the audience long before this scene, it must have been the fault of the performers. We witnessed its revival at the Park Theatre a short time since—Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean appearing as the married pair; and it has rarely been our lot to see a play go off so much to the amusement and satisfaction of an audience, from its very beginning. Among the scenes which were highly effective, we might mention that of *Mrs. Oakly's* visit to *Lady Freelove*; that where *Harriet* is discovered in conversation with *Mr. Oakly* at his own house; and that between the jealous wife and her servants, at the opening of the fifth act. In the scene where the husband holds out against the hysterical arts and menaces of his wife, and breaks forth into open rebellion with the exclamation, "I'll keep open house for a year; I'll send cards to the whole town—Mr. Oakly's route!—all the world will come, and I'll go among the world too: I'll be mewed up no longer!"—the male portion of the audience applauded with a sober earnestness, which spoke the truthfulness of the situation, and their sympathy with the emancipated hero.

The character of *Mrs. Oakly* is a very hazardous one to impersonate. Smoothness must be given to the whirlwind of her passion, or she will excite our resentment, instead of interesting

our sense of the comic. An inferior actress will make her either too vehement and vulgar, or too tame. We doubt if either Mrs. Pritchard or Mrs. Glover ever excelled Mrs. Kean in this part; for, while her performance lacked nothing in spirit, it never called up an idea of surprise that such a woman could retain the affections of such a man.

The original edition of this play contains a frank acknowledgment of the author's obligations in its construction. He says: "The use that has been made in this comedy of Fielding's admirable novel of Tom Jones, must be obvious to the most ordinary reader. Some hints have also been taken from the account of Mr. and Mrs. Freeman in Nos. 212 and 216 of the Spectator; and the short scene of Charles's intoxication at the end of the third act, is partly an imitation of the behaviour of Syrus, much in the same circumstances, in the Adelphi of Terence. There are also some traces of the character of the Jealous Wife, in one of the later papers of the Connoisseur. It would be unjust to omit mentioning my obligations to Mr. Garrick. To his inspection the comedy was submitted, in its first rude state; and to my care and attention to follow his advice in many particulars, relating both to fable and characters, I know that I am much indebted for the reception which this piece has met with from the public."

The probability is, that had not the author acknowledged his indebtedness to Fielding, it would never have been suspected. "The outline of the plot," says Hazlitt, "and some of the characters, are certainly the same; but the filling-up destroys the likeness. There is all in the novel that there is in the play, but there is so much in the novel that is not in the play, that the total impression is quite different, and loses even an appearance of resemblance."

Most of the characters of this comedy are skilfully drawn, and well adapted to the sphere of the drama. But we must except that of *Terence O' Cutter*, who is evidently a fellow trying to ape the Irishman, and not a genuine personage. His love of fighting is all affectation and bluster; and his Hibernicisms are forced and far-fetched. If he is ever made amusing or acceptable on the stage, it may be placed to the credit of the actor, rather than of the author.

Hazlitt, whose theatrical criticisms are usually well-considered and acute, remarks on this comedy: "Colman was the translator of Terence; and the 'Jealous Wife' is a classical play. The plot is regular, the characters well supported, and the moral the best in the world. The dialogue has more sense than wit. The ludicrous arises from the skilful development of the characters, and the absurdities they commit in their own persons, rather than from the smart reflections which are made upon them by others. Thus, nothing can be more ridiculous or more instructive than the scenes of which *Mrs. Oakly* is the heroine; yet they are all serious, and unconscious. In other words, the character is pure comedy, not satire. The progressive winding up of the story, is excellently managed. The jealousy and hysterical violence of *Mrs. Oakly* increase every moment, as the pretext for them becomes more and more frivolous. The attention is kept alive by our doubts about *Oakly's* wavering (but in the end triumphant) firmness; and the arch insinuations and well-concerted home-thrusts of the *Major*, heighten the comic interest of the scene.

"The under-plot of the two lovers is very ingeniously fitted into the principal one, and is not without interest in itself.—*Charles Oakly* is a spirited, well-meaning, thoughtless young fellow, and *Harriet Russet* is an amiable, romantic girl, in that very common, but always romantic situation—in love. Her persecution from the addresses of *Lord Trinket* and *Sir Harry Beagle*, fans the gentle flame which had been kindled just a year before in her breast, produces the adventures and cross purposes of the plot, and at last reconciles her to, and throws her into the arms of her lover, in spite of her resentment for his conduct and apparent want of delicacy. The figure which *Lord Trinket* and *Lady Freelove* make in the piece, is as odious and contemptible as it is possible for people in that class of life (and for no others) to make. The insolence, the meanness, the affectation, the hollowness, the want of humanity, sincerity, principle and delicacy, are such as can only be found where artificial rank and station in society supersede not merely a regard to propriety of conduct, but the necessity even of an attention to appearances. The morality of the stage has (we are ready to hope) told in that direction as well as others, and has, in some measure, suppressed the

suffocating pretensions and flaunting affectation of vice and folly in 'persons of honour', and, as it were, humanized rank and title."

The Jealous Wife has now retained its place upon the stage nearly a century; and if it is not alive a century hence, it must be because it will be eclipsed by better plays. From present appearances this contingency is not likely to become soon a matter of fact.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

	Drury Lane, 1761.	*Covent Garden*, 1818.	*Park*, 1846.
Mr. Oakly	Mr. Garrick.	Mr. Young	Mr. Charles Kean.
Major Oakly	" Yates.	" Terry.	" Barry.
Charles Oakly	" Palmer.	" C. Kemble.	" Dyott.
Mr. Russet	" Burton.	" Blanchard	" Bass.
Sir Harry Beagle	" King.	" Fawcett.	" G. Andrews.
Captain O'Cutter	" Moody.	" Tokely.	" Anderson.
Lord Trinket	" O' Brien.	" Jones.	" A. Andrews.
Paris	" Blaket.	" Menage.	" M' Douall.
William	" Ackman.	" Jefferies.	" Milot.
John	" Castle.	" Lambert.	" Sprague.
Tom	" Clough.	" Atkins.	" Povey.
Lady Freelove's Serv.	" Fox.	" Louis.	" Gallot.
Mrs. Oakly	Mrs. Pritchard.	Miss O' Neill.	Mrs. Chas. Kean.
Lady Freelove	Mrs. Clive.	Mrs. Gibbs.	Mrs. Vernon.
Harriet Russet	Miss Pritchard.	Miss Bristow.	Mrs. Abbott.
Toilet	Mrs. Johnson.	Miss Logau.	Miss Gordon.
Chambermaid	Mrs. Simpson.	Mrs. Hardy.	Miss Hall.

COSTUMES.

MAJOR OAKLY.—Military hat and white feathers, blue jacket with scarlet and gold facings, buff pantaloons, military boots, and cane.

OAKLY.—Black coat, waistcoat, and breeches, silk stockings, and shoes.

CHARLES.—Dress hat, blue dress coat, white pantaloons, white silk stockings, and shoes.

LORD TRINKET.—Dress hat, purple velvet and gold coat with gold spangles, white satin waistcoat with spangles, white satin breeches, white silk stockings, shoes and buckles, and sword.

CAPTAIN O'CUTTER.—Blue naval uniform, white waistcoat and breeches.

RUSSET.—Drab coat, red waistcoat, and boots.

SIR HARRY BEAGLE.—Scarlet or coloured frock coat, buff waistcoat with scarlet one under, white cord breeches, top boots, and hunting whip.

PARIS.—French coat, striped pink and white waistcoat, buff pantaloons trimmed with black.

MRS. OAKLY.—White or light-coloured silk or satin dress, tastefully trimmed, and fashionable hat.

LADY FREELOVE.—Round hat with white plumes, white satin dress, trimmed with pink and roses.

HARRIET.—White, trimmed with lace, and white satin riband.

THE JEALOUS WIFE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Room in Oakly's House. Noise heard without,* L.

Mrs. O. [*Without*] DON'T tell me—I know it is so—It's monstrous, and I will not bear it.

Oak. [*Without*] But, my dear!

Mrs. O. Nay, nay, &c.

Enter MRS. OAKLY, L. *with a letter, crossing, followed by* OAKLY.

Mrs. O. (R. C.) Say what you will, Mr. Oakly, you shall never persuade me, but this is some filthy intrigue of yours.

Oak. (C.) I can assure you, my love—

Mrs. O. Your love!—Don't I know your—Tell me, I say, this instant, every circumstance relating to this letter.

Oak. How can I tell you, when you will not so much as let me see it?

Mrs. O. Look you, Mr. Oakly, this usage is not to be borne. You take a pleasure in abusing my tenderness and soft disposition. (R.) To be perpetually running over the whole town, nay, the whole kingdom, too, in pursuit of your amours!—[*Returns to* C.] Did not I discover that you was great with mademoiselle, my own woman?—Did you not contract a shameful familiarity with Mrs. Freeman? Did not I detect your intrigue with Lady Wealthy?—Was not you—

Oak. (L. C.) Oons! madam, the grand Turk himself has not half so many mistresses.—You throw me out of all pa-

tience—Do I know any body but our common friends?—Am I visited by any body that does not visit you?—Do I ever go out, unless you go with me?—(c.) And am I not as constantly by your side as if I was tied to your apron-strings?

Mrs. O. (r. c.) Go, go, you are a false man—Have not I found you out a thousand times? And have not I this moment a letter in my hand, which convinces me of your baseness?—Let me know the whole affair, or I will—

Oak. Let you know! Let me know what you would have of me——You stop my letter before it comes to my hands, and then expect that I should know the contents of it!

Mrs. O. (r.) Heaven be praised, I stopped it! I suspected some of these doings for some time past—But the letter informs me who she is, and I'll be revenged on her sufficiently. [*Crosses.*] Oh, you base man, you!

Oak. I beg, my dear, that you would moderate your passion!—Show me the letter, and I'll convince you of my innocence.

Mrs. O. (l. c.) Innocence!—Abominable!—Innocence!—But I am not to be made such a fool—I am convinced of your perfidy, and very sure that——

Oak. (c.) 'Sdeath and fire! your passion hurries you out of your senses—Will you hear me?

Mrs. O. No, you are a base man: and I will not hear you. [*Crosses* r.]

Oak. Why then, my dear, since you will neither talk reasonably yourself, nor listen to reason from me, I shall take my leave till you are in a better humour. So, your servant! [*Going up the stage.*

Mrs. O. [*Turns.*] Ay, go, you cruel man!—Go to your mistresses, and leave your poor wife to her miseries.—— How unfortunate a woman am I!—I could die with vexation— [*Throwing herself into a chair back of* r. c.

Oak. [*Comes down* l.] There it is—Now dare not I stir a step further—If I offer to go, she is in one of her fits in an instant.—Never sure was woman at once of so violent and so delicate a constitution! What shall I say to soothe her? [*Aside. Goes for a chair, and sits by her,* l.] Nay, never make thyself so uneasy, my dear—Come, come you know I love you.

Mrs. O. I know you hate me; and that your unkindness and barbarity will be the death of me. [*Weeps.*

Oak. Do not vex yourself at this rate—I love you most passionately—Indeed I do—This must be some mistake.

Mrs. O. Oh, I am an unhappy woman! [*Weeping.*

Oak. Dry up thy tears, my love, and be comforted! You will find that I am not to blame in this matter—Come, let me see this letter—Nay, you shall not deny me.

[*Takes the letter.*

Mrs. O. There! take it; you know the hand, I am sure.

Oak. [*Reads.*] 'To Charles Oakly, Esq.'—Hand! 'Tis a clerk-like hand, a good round text! and was certainly never penned by a fair lady.

Mrs. O. Ay, laugh at me, do!

Oak. Forgive me, my love, I did not mean to laugh at you—But what says the letter? [*Rises, advances to the front, and reads.*] 'Daughter eloped—you must be privy to it—scandalous—dishonourable—satisfaction—revenge um, um, um,—injured father,

'HENRY RUSSET.'

Mrs. O. [*Rising.*] Well, sir—you see I have detected you—Tell me this instant where she is concealed.

Oak. So—so—so—This hurts me—I'm shocked,

[*Aside.*

Mrs. O. [*Standing on his* R., *unnoticed by him.*] What, are you confounded with your guilt? Have I caught you at last?

Oak. O that wicked Charles! To decoy a young lady from her parents in the country! The profligacy of the young fellows of this age is abominable. [*Aside.*

Mrs. O. [*Half aside, and musing.*] Charles!—Let me see!—Charles!—No! Impossible! This is all a trick.

Oak. He has certainly ruined this poor lady. [*Aside.*

Mrs. O. Art! art! all art! There's a sudden turn now! You have ready wit for an intrigue, I find.

Oak. Such an abandoned action! I wish I had never had the care of him.

Mrs. O. Mighty fine, Mr. Oakly! Go on, sir, go on! I see what you mean. Your assurance provokes me beyond your very falsehood itself. [*He here appears to notice her.*] So you imagine, sir, that this affected concern, this

flimsy pretence about Charles, is to bring you off. Matchless confidence! But I am armed against every thing—I am prepared for all your dark schemes: I am aware of all your low stratagems.

Oak. See there now! Was ever any thing so provoking? To persevere in your ridiculous—For heaven's sake, my dear, don't distract me. When you see my mind thus agitated and uneasy, that a young fellow, whom his dying father, my own brother, committed to my care, should be guilty of such enormous wickedness; I say, when you are witness of my distress on this occasion, how can you be weak enough and cruel enough to—

Mrs. O. Prodigiously well, sir! You do it very well. Nay, keep it up, carry it on; there's nothing like going through with it. O, you artful creature! But, sir, I am not to be so easily satisfied. I do not believe a syllable of all this—Give me the letter—[*Snatches the letter.*] You shall sorely repent this vile business, for I am resolved that I will know the bottom of it.

[*She goes* R., *he follows.* *Exit Mrs. O.*, R.

Oak. [*Returning from* R. *to* C.] This is beyond all patience. Provoking woman! Her absurd suspicions interpret every thing the wrong way. But this ungracious boy! in how many troubles will he involve his own and his lady's family!—[*Turns back.*] I never imagined that he was of such abandoned principles.

[*Walks up and down*, R.

Enter Major Oakly *and* Charles, L.

Charles, (L.) Good morrow, sir!

Maj. O. (L. C.) Good morrow, brother, good morrow:—What! you have been at the old work, I find. I heard you—ding! dong! i'faith!—She has rung a noble peal in your ears. But how now? (R. C.) Why, sure you've had a remarkable warm bout on't—You seem more ruffled than usual.

Oak. [*Comes to* C.] I am, indeed, brother! Thanks to that young gentleman there. Have a care, Charles! you may be called to a severe account for this. The honour of a family, sir, is no such light matter.

Charles. (L. C.) Sir!

Maj. O. Hey-day! What, has a curtain lecture produced a lecture of morality? What is all this?

Oak. (L. C.) To a profligate mind, perhaps, these things may appear agreeable in the beginning, But don't you tremble at the consequences?

Charles. I see, sir, that you are displeased with me; but I am quite at a loss to guess at the occasion.

Oak. Tell me, sir!—where is Miss Harriet Russet?

[*Crosses*, C.

Charles. Miss Harriet Russet!—Sir—Explain.

Oak. Have you not decoyed her from her father?

Charles. I!—Decoyed her—Decoyed my Harriet!—I would sooner die than do her the least injury.—What can this mean?

Maj. O. I believe the young dog has been at her, after all.

Oak. I was in hopes, Charles, you had better principles. But there's a letter just come from her father—

Charles. A letter!—What letter? Dear sir, give it me. Some intelligence of my Harriet, Major!—The letter, sir, the letter this moment, for Heaven's sake!

Oak. If this warmth, Charles, tends to prove your innocence—

Charles. Dear sir, excuse me—I'll prove any thing—Let me but see this letter, and I'll—

Oak. Let you see it!—I could hardly get a sight of it myself. Mrs. Oakly has it.

Charles. Has she got it? Major, I'll be with you again directly. [*Exit hastily*, R.

Maj. O. Hey-day! The devil's in the boy! What a fiery set of people! By my troth, I think the whole family is made of nothing but combustibles.

Oak. I like this emotion; it looks well: it may serve, too, to convince my wife of the folly of her suspicions. Would to Heaven I could quiet them for ever!

Maj. O. (C.) Why pray now, my dear, naughty brother, what heinous offence have you committed this morning? What new cause of suspicion? You have been asking one of the maids to mend your ruffle, I suppose, or have been hanging your head out at the window, when a pretty young woman has passed by, or—

Oak. [*Walking about on the* L.] How can you trifle with my distresses, Major? Did I not tell you it was about a letter?

Maj. O. A letter!—hum—A suspicious circumstance, to be sure! What, and the seal a true lover's knot now, hey? or a heart transfixed with darts; or possibly the wax bore the industrious impression of a thimble; or, perhaps, the folds were lovingly connected by a wafer, pricked with a pin, and the direction written in a vile scrawl, and not a word spelt as it should be! Ha, ha, ha!

Oak. Pooh! brother—Whatever it was, the letter, you find, was for Charles, not for me—this outrageous jealousy is the devil! [*Crosses to* R.

Maj. O. Mere matrimonial blessings and domestic comfort, brother! jealousy is a certain sign of love.

Oak. (L. C.) Love? it is this very love that hath made us both so miserable. Her love for me has confined me to my house, like a state prisoner, without the liberty of seeing my friends, or having the use of pen, ink, and paper; while my love for her has made such a fool of me, that I have never had the spirit to contradict her.

Maj. O. (R. C.) Ay, ay, there you've hit it; Mrs. Oakly would make an excellent wife, if you did but know how to manage her,

Oak. You are a rare fellow, indeed, to talk of managing a wife—a debauched bachelor—a rattle-brained, rioting fellow—who have picked up your common-place notions of women in bagnios, taverns, and the camp; whose most refined commerce with the sex has been in order to delude country girls at your quarters, or to besiege the virtue of abigails, milliners, or mantua-makers' apprentices.

Maj. O. So much the better!—so much the better! women are all alike in the main, brother, high or low, married or single, quality or no quality. I have found them so, from a duchess down to a milk-maid; every woman is a tyrant at the bottom. But they could never make a fool of me.—No, no! no woman should ever domineer over me, let her be mistress or wife.

Oak. Single men can be no judges in these cases. They must happen in all families. But when things are driven to extremities—to see a woman in uneasiness—a woman one loves too—one's wife—who can withstand it? You neither speak nor think like a man that has loved and been married, Major!

Maj. O. I wish I could hear a married man speak my language—I'm a bachelor, it's true; but I am no bad judge of your case, for all that. I know your's and Mrs. Oakly's disposition to a hair. She is all impetuosity and fire—a very magazine of touchwood and gunpowder. You are hot enough, too, upon occasions, but then it's over in an instant. In comes love and conjugal affection, as you call it; that is, mere folly and weakness—and you draw off your forces, just when you should pursue the attack, and follow your advantage. Have at her with spirit, and the day's your own, brother.

Oak. Why, what would you have me do?

Maj. O. Do as you please for one month, whether she likes it or not: and I'll answer for it, she will consent you shall do as you please all her life after. In short, do but show yourself a man of spirit, leave off whining about love and tenderness, and nonsense, and the business is done, brother.

Oak. I believe you are in the right, Major! I see you are in the right. I'll do it—I'll certainly do it.—But then it hurts me to the soul, to think what uneasiness I shall give her. The first opening of my design will throw her into fits, and the pursuit of it, perhaps, may be fatal.

Maj. O. Fits! ha, ha, ha!—I'll engage to cure her of her fits. Nobody understands hysterical cases better than I do; besides, my sister's symptoms are not very dangerous. Did you ever hear of her falling into a fit when you was not by?—Was she ever found in convulsions in her closet?—No, no: these fits, the more care you take of them, the more you will increase the distemper; let them alone, and they will wear themselves out, I warrant you.

Oak. True, very true—you are certainly in the right—I'll follow your advice. Where do you dine to-day?—I'll order the coach, and go with you.

Maj. O. O brave! keep up this spirit, and you are made for ever.

Oak. You shall see now, Major!—Who's there?

Enter SERVANT, L.

Order the coach directly. I shall dine out to-day.

Serv. (L.) The coach, sir?—Now, sir?

Oak. (L. C.) Ay, now, immediately.

Serv. Now, sir!—the—the—coach, sir?—that is—my mistress—

Maj. O. [*Goes threatening towards Servant.*] Sirrah! do as you are bid. Bid them put-to this instant.

Serv. Yes—yes, sir—yes, sir. [*Exit*, L.

Oak. Well, where shall we dine?

Maj. O. [*Returning.*] At the St. Albans', or where you will. This is excellent, if you will but hold it.

Oak. I will have my own way, I am determined.

Maj. O. (R. C.) That's right.

Oak. I am steel.

Maj. O. Bravo!

Oak. Adamant.

Maj. O. Bravissimo!

Oak. Just what you'd have me.

Maj. O. Why, that's well said. But will you do it?

Oak. I will.

Maj. O. You won't.

Oak. (C.) I will. I'll be a fool to her no longer. But harkye, Major, my hat and gloves lie in my study. I'll go and steal them out, while she is busy talking with Charles.

Maj. O. (L. C.) Steal them! for shame! Pr'ythee take them boldly; call for them; make them bring them to you here; and go out with spirit, in the face of your whole family.

Oak. No, no—you are wrong—let her rave after I am gone; and when I return, you know, I shall exert myself with more propriety, after this open affront to her authority.

Maj. O. Well, take your own way.

Oak. Ay, ay—let me manage it, let me manage it. [*Exit*, R.

Maj. O. (C.) Manage it! ay, to be sure, you are a rare manager! It is dangerous, they say, to meddle between man and wife. I am no great favourite of Mrs. Oakly's already; and in a week's time I expect to have the door shut in my face.

Enter CHARLES, R.

How now, Charles, what news?

Charles. (R. C.) Ruined and undone! She's gone, uncle, my Harriet's lost for ever!

Maj. O. Gone off with a man?—I thought so; they are all alike.

Charles. Oh, no! Fled to avoid that hateful match with Sir Harry Beagle.

Maj. O. Faith, a girl of spirit; but whence comes all this intelligence?

Charles. In an angry letter from her father—How miserable I am! If I had not offended my Harriet, much offended her, by that foolish riot and drinking at your house in the country, she would certainly, at such a time, have taken refuge in my arms.

Maj. O. A very agreeable refuge for a young lady, to be sure, and extremely decent!

Charles. What a heap of extravagances was I guilty of!

[*Goes* R., *and returns to* C.

Maj. O. Extravagances with a witness! Ah, you silly young dog, you would ruin yourself with her father, in spite of all I could do. There you sat, as drunk as a lord, telling the old gentleman the whole affair, and swearing you would drive Sir Harry Beagle out of the country, though I kept winking and nodding, pulling you by the sleeve, and kicking your shins under the table, in hopes of stopping you; but all to no purpose.

Charles. What distress may she be in at this instant! Alone and defenceless!—Where, where can she be?

[*Walks about,* L.

Maj. O. What relations or friends has she in town?

Charles. Relations! let me see.—Faith, I have it!—If she is in town, ten to one but she is at her aunt's, Lady Freelove's. I'll go thither immediately. [*Crosses to* L.

Maj. O. (C.) Lady Freelove's! Hold, hold, Charles!—Do you know her ladyship?

Charles. (L. C.) Not much! but I'll break through all, to get to my Harriet.

Maj. O. I do know her ladyship.

Charles. Well, and what do you know of her?

Maj. O. O, nothing!—Her ladyship is a woman of the world, that's all—

Charles. What do you mean?

Maj. O. That Lady Freelove is an arrant—By-the-bye, did not she, last summer, make formal proposals to Harriet's father from Lord Trinket?

Charles. Yes; but they were received with the utmost contempt. The old gentleman, it seems, hates a lord, and he told her so in plain terms.

Maj. O. Such an aversion to the nobility may not run in the blood. The girl, I warrant you, has no objection. However, if she's there, watch her narrowly, Charles. Lady Freelove is as mischievous as a monkey, and as cunning too.—Have a care of her, I say, have a care of her.

Charles. (c.) If she's there, I'll have her out of the house within this half hour, or set fire to it. [*Runs*, l.

Maj. O. (l. c.) Nay, now you are too violent—stay a moment, and we'll consider what's best to be done.

Enter Oakly, r.

Oak. Come, is the coach ready? Let us be gone. Does Charles go with us?

Charles. I go with you!—What can I do! I am so vexed and distracted, and so many thoughts crowd in upon me, I don't know which way to turn myself.

[*Retires back.*

Mrs. O. [*Without*, r.] The coach! dines out!—Where is your master?

Oak. Zounds, brother! here she is!

Enter Mrs. Oakly, r.

Mrs. O. (r.) Pray, Mr. Oakly, what is the matter you cannot dine at home to-day?

Oak. (c.) Don't be uneasy, my dear!—I have a little business to settle with my brother; so I am only just going to dinner, with him and Charles, to the tavern.

Mrs. O. Why cannot you settle your business here, as well as at a tavern? but it is some of your ladies' business, I suppose, and so you must get rid of my company.—[*Crosses to him*, l.] This is chiefly your fault, Major Oakly!

Maj. O. (l.) Lord, sister, what signifies it, whether a man dines at home or abroad? [*Coolly.*

Mrs. O. (l.) It signifies a great deal, sir! and I don't choose ——

Maj. O. Pooh! let him go, my dear sister, let him go! he will be ten times better company when he comes back. I tell you what, sister—you sit at home till you are quite

tired of one another, and then you grow cross, and fall out. If you would but part a little now and then, you might meet again in humour,

Mrs. O. I beg, Major Oakly, that you would trouble yourself about your own affairs; and let me tell you, sir, that I——

Oak. Nay, do not put thyself into a passion with the Major, my dear!—It is not his fault; and I shall come back to thee very soon.

Mrs. O. Come back!—why need you go out?—I know well enough when you mean to deceive me; for then there is always a pretence of dining with Sir John, or my lord, or somebody: [*Crosses.*] but when you tell me that you are going to a tavern, it's such a bare-faced affront!

[*Crosses to* R.

Oak. This is so strange now!—Why, my dear, I shall only just——

Mrs. O. (R.) Only just go after the lady in the letter, I suppose.

Oak. Well, well, I won't go then.—Will that convince you? I'll stay with you, my dear.—Will that satisfy you?

Maj. O. For shame! hold out, if you are a man.

[*Apart.*

Oak. She has been so much vexed this morning already, I must humour her a little now. [*Apart.*

Maj. O. Fie! fie! go out, or you are undone. [*Apart.*

Oak. [*Going* R.] You see it's impossible. [*Apart to Major O.*] I'll dine at home with thee, my love.

[*Apart to Mrs. Oakly.*

Mrs. O. Ay, ay, pray do, sir.—Dine at a tavern indeed!

[*Going.*

Oak. [*Returning from* R.] You may depend on me another time, Major.

Maj. O. (L. C.) Steel and adamant!—Ah!

Mrs. O. [*Returning.*] Mr. Oakly!

Oak. [*Turns after her.*] O my dear!

[*Exit, with Mrs. Oakly,* R.

Maj. O. (C.) Ha, ha, ha! there's a picture of resolution! there goes a philosopher for you! ha! Charles!

Charles. [*Coming down.*] Oh, uncle! I have no spirits to laugh now.

Maj. O. So! I have a fine time on't between you and

my brother. Will you meet me to dinner at the St. Alban's, by four? We'll drink her health, and think of this affair.

Charles. Don't depend on me. I shall be running all over the town, in pursuit of my Harriet; at all events, I'll go directly to Lady Freelove's. If I find her not there, which way I shall direct myself, Heaven knows.

Maj. O. Harkye, Charles! If you meet with her, you may be at a loss. Bring her to my house; I have a snug room, and——

Charles. Pooh! Pr'ythee, uncle, don't trifle with me now.

Maj. O. Well, seriously, then, my house is at your service.

Charles. I thank you; but I must be gone.

Maj. O. Ay, ay, bring her to my house, and we'll settle the whole affair for you. You shall clap her into a post-chaise, take the chaplain of our regiment along with you, wheel her down to Scotland, and when you come back, send to settle her fortune with her father; that's the modern art of making love, Charles! [*Exeunt*, L.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

Scene 1.—*A Room in the George and Blue Boar.*

Enter Sir Harry Beagle *and* Tom, R.

Sir H. (R.) Ten guineas a mare, and a crown the man? hey, Tom!

Tom. (R.) Yes, your honour.

Sir H. (C.) And are you sure, Tom, that there is no flaw in his blood?

Tom. (R. C.) He's a good thing, sir, and as little beholden to the ground, as any horse that ever went over the turf upon four legs. Why, here's his whole pedigree, your honour!

Sir H. Is it attested?

Tom. Very well attested; it is signed by Jack Spur and my Lord Startal. [*Giving the pedigree*

Sir H. Let me see. [*Reads.*] "Tom-come-tickle-me was out of the famous Tantwivy mare, by Sir Aaron Driver's chesnut horse, White Stockings. White Stockings, his dam, was got by Lord Hedge's South Barb, full sister to the Proserpine Filly, and his sire Tom Jones; his grandam was the Irish Duchess, and his grandsire Squire Sportley's Trajan; his great and great great grandam were Newmarket Peggy and Black Moll; and his great grandsire and great great grandsire, were Sir Ralph Whip's Regulus, and the famous Prince Anamaboo.

his
JOHN ⋈ SPUR.
mark.
STARTAL."

Tom. All fine horses, and won every thing! a foal out of your honour's bald-faced Venus, by this horse, would beat the world.

Sir H. Well, then, we'll think on't.—But, plague on't, Tom, I have certainly knocked up my little roan gelding in this confounded wild-goose chase of threescore miles an end.

Tom. He's deadly blown, to be sure, your honour; and I am afraid we are upon a wrong scent after all. Madam Harriet certainly took across the country, instead of coming on to London.

Sir H. No, no, we traced her all the way up. But d'ye hear, Tom, look out among the stables and repositories here in town, for a smart road nag, and a strong horse to carry a portmanteau.

Tom. Sir Roger Turf's horses are to be sold—I'll see if there's ever a tight thing there.—But I suppose, sir, you would have one somewhat stronger than Snip—I don't think he's quite enough of a horse for your honour.

Sir H. Not enough of a horse! Snip's a powerful gelding; master of two stone more than my weight. If Snip stands sound, I would not take a hundred guineas for him. Poor Snip! go into the stable, Tom; see they give him a warm mash, and look at his heels and his eyes.—But where's Mr. Russet all this while?

Tom. I left the squire at breakfast on a cold pigeon pie, and inquiring after Madam Harriet in the kitchen. I'll let him know your honour would be glad to see him here.

Sir H. Ay, do; but harkye, Tom, be sure you take care of Snip.

Tom. I'll warrant your honour.

Sir H. I'll be down in the stables myself by-and-by. [*Exit Tom,* R.] Let me see—out of the famous Tantwivy by White Stockings? White Stockings, his dam, full sister to the Proserpine Filly; and his sire—plague on't, how unlucky it is that this infernal accident should happen in the Newmarket week!—Ten to one I lose my match with Lord Chokejade, by not riding myself; and I shall have no opportunity to hedge my bets neither.—What a fine piece of work have I made on't—I have knocked up poor Snip, shall lose my match, and as to Harriet, why the odds are that I lose my match there too—a skittish young tit! If I once get her tight in hand, I'll make her wince for it.—Her estate, joined to my own, I would have the finest stud and the noblest kennel in the whole country.—But here comes her father, puffing and blowing, like a broken-winded horse up hill.

Enter Russet, R.

Rus. (R.) Well, Sir Harry, have you heard any thing of her?

Sir H. (C.) Yes, I have been asking Tom about her, and he says you may have her for five hundred guineas.

Rus. (R. C.) Five hundred guineas! how d'ye mean? where is she? which way did she take?

Sir H. Why first she went to Epsom, then to Lincoln, then to Nottingham, and now she is at York.

Rus. Impossible! she could not go over half the ground in the time. What the devil are you talking of?

Sir H. Of the mare you was just now saying you wanted to buy.

Rus. The devil take the mare!—who would think of her, when I am mad about an affair of so much more consequence?

Sir H. You seemed mad about her a little while ago. She's a fine mare, and a thing of shape and blood.

Rus. Damn her blood!—Harriet! my dear, provoking Harriet! Where can she be? Have you got any intelligence of her?

Sir H. No, faith, not I: we seem to be quite thrown

out here—but, however, I have ordered Tom to try if he can hear any thing of her among the ostlers.

Rus. Why don't you inquire after her yourself? why don't you run up and down the whole town after her?—T'other young rascal knows where she is, I warrant you. What a plague it is to have a daughter! But she shall have him—I will make her happy, if I break her heart for it.—A provoking gipsy—to run away, and torment her poor father, that dotes on her! I'll never see her face again. Sir Harry, how can we get any intelligence of her? Why don't you speak? why don't you tell me?—Zounds! you seem as indifferent as if you did not care a farthing about her.

Sir H. Indifferent! you may well call me indifferent!—this confounded chase after her will cost me a thousand: if it had not been for her, I would not have been off the course this week to have saved the lives of my whole family—I'll hold you six to two that——

Rus. Zounds! hold your tongue, or talk more to the purpose—I swear she is too good for you—you don't deserve such a wife—a fine, dear, sweet, lovely, charming girl!—She'll break my heart.—How shall I find her out? Do, pr'ythee, Sir Harry, my dear honest friend, consider how we may discover where she is fled to.

Sir H. Suppose you put an advertisement into the newspapers, describing her marks, her age, her height, and where she strayed from. I recovered a bay mare once by that method.

Rus. Advertise her!—What! describe my daughter, and expose her in the public papers, with a reward for bringing her home, like horses stolen or strayed!—recovered a bay mare!—the devil's in the fellow!—he thinks of nothing but racers, and bay mares, and stallions—'Sdeath, I wish your——

Sir H. I wish Harriet was fairly pounded; it would save us both a deal of trouble.

Rus. Which way shall I turn myself?—I am half distracted. If I go to that young dog's house, he has certainly conveyed her somewhere out of my reach—if she does not send to me to-day, I'll give her up for ever—perhaps, though, she may have met with some accident, and has nobody to assist her.—No, she is certainly with that young

rascal. I wish she was dead, and I was dead. I'll blow young Oakly's brains out. [*Goes back.*

Re-enter Tom, R.

Sir H. Well, Tom, how is poor Snip?

Tom. (R.) A little better, sir, after his warm mash: but Lady, the pointing bitch that followed you all the way, is deadly foot-sore. [*Russet comes down hastily*, R.

Rus. Damn Snip and Lady!—have you heard anything of Harriet?

Tom. Why, I came on purpose to let my master and your honour know, that John Ostler says, as how just such a lady as I told him madam Harriet was, came here in a four-wheeled chaise, and was fetched away soon after by a fine lady in a chariot.

Rus. (R. C.) Did she come alone?

Tom. Quite alone, only a servant maid, please your honour.

Rus. And what part of the town did they go to?

Tom. John Ostler says as how they bid the coachman drive to Grosvenor-Square.

Sir H. Soho! puss—Yoics!

Rus. She is certainly gone to that young rogue—he has got his aunt to fetch her from hence—or else she is with her own aunt, Lady Freelove—they both live in that part of the town. I'll go to the house, and in the mean while, Sir Harry, you shall step to Lady Freelove's. We'll find her, I warrant you. I'll teach my young mistress to be gadding. She shall marry you to-night. Come along, Sir Harry, come along; we won't lose a minute. Come along.

Sir H. Soho! hark forward! wind 'em and cross 'em! hark forward! Yoics! Yoics! [*Exeunt*, R.

Scene II.—*Oakly's House.*

Enter Mrs. Oakly, R.

Mrs. O. (R.) After all, that letter was certainly intended for my husband. I see plain enough they are all in a plot against me. (C.) My husband intriguing, the Major working him up to affront me, Charles owning his letters, and so playing into each other's hands. They think me a fool,

I find—but I'll be too much for them yet. I have desired to speak with Mr. Oakly, and expect him here immediately. His temper is naturally open; and if he thinks my anger abated and my suspicions laid asleep, he will certainly betray himself by his behaviour. I'll assume an air of good humour, pretend to believe the fine story they have trumped up, throw him off his guard, and so draw the secret out of him.—Here he comes. How hard it is to dissemble one's anger! Oh! I could rate him soundly; but I'll keep down my indignation at present, though it chokes me.

[*Assumes an air of tenderness, and goes to meet him.*

Enter Oakly, L.

Oh, my dear! I am very glad to see you. Pray sit down. [*They sit, he with his back towards her.*] I longed to see you. It seemed an age till I had an opportunity of talking over the silly affair that happened this morning. [*Mildly.*

Oak. Why, really, my dear—— [*Gradually turning.*

Mrs. O. Nay, don't look so grave now. Come, it's all over. Charles and you have cleared up matters. I am satisfied.

Oak. Indeed! [*Takes her hand.*] I rejoice to hear it! You make me happy beyond my expectation. This disposition will ensure our felicity. Do but lay aside your cruel, unjust suspicion, and we should never have the least difference.

Mrs. O. Indeed, I begin to think so. I'll endeavour to get the better of it. And really, sometimes it is very ridiculous. My uneasiness this morning, for instance, ha, ha, ha! To be so much alarmed about the idle letter, which turned out quite another thing at last—was not I very angry with you? ha, ha, ha! [*With affected gaiety.*

Oak. Don't mention it. Let us both forget it. Your present cheerfulness makes amends for everything.

Mrs. O. I am apt to be too violent; I love you too well to be quite easy about you. [*Fondly tapping his chin.*]—Well—no matter—what is become of Charles?

Oak. Poor fellow! he is on the wing, rambling all over the town in pursuit of this young lady.

Mrs. O. Where is he gone, pray?

Oak. First of all, I believe, to some of her relations.

Mrs. O. Relations! Who are they? Where do they ve?

Oak. There is an aunt of her's lives just in the neighbourhood: Lady Freelove.

Mrs. O. Lady Freelove! Oho! gone to Lady Freelove's, is he?—and do you think he will hear anything of her?

Oak. I don't know; but I hope so, with all my soul.

Mrs. O. Hope! with all your soul; do you hope so?

[*Alarmed—they part a little.*

Oak. Hope so! ye—yes—why, don't you hope so?

Mrs. O. Why—yes.—[*Close again—recovering.*] Oh, ay, to be sure. I hope it of all things. You know, my dear, it must give me great satisfaction, as well as yourself, to see Charles well settled.

Oak. I should think so; and really, I don't know where he can be settled so well. She is a most deserving young woman, I assure you.

Mrs. O. You are well acquainted with her, then?

Oak. To be sure, my dear; after seeing her so often last summer, at the Major's house in the country, and at her father's.

Mrs. O. So often!

Oak. Ay—very often—Charles took care of that—almost every day.

Mrs. O. Indeed? But pray—a—a—I say—a—a——

[*Confused.*

Oak. What do you say, my dear?

Mrs. O. I say—a—a—[*Stammering.*] Is she handsome?

Oak. Prodigiously handsome, indeed.

Mrs. O. Prodigiously handsome! and is she reckoned a sensible girl?

Oak. A very sensible, modest, agreeable young lady as ever I knew. You would be extremely fond of her, I am sure.

Mrs. O. Oh, I dare say I shall.

Oak. You can't imagine how happy I was in her company. Poor Charles! she soon made a conquest of him, and no wonder, she has so many elegant accomplishments! Such an infinite fund of cheerfulness and good humour. Why, she's the darling of the whole country.

Mrs. O. Lord, you seem quite in raptures about her!

Oak. Raptures!—not at all. I was only telling you the young lady's character. I thought you would be glad to

find that Charles had made so sensible a choice, and was so likely to be happy.

Mrs. O. Oh, Charles? True, as you say, Charles will be mighty happy.

Oak. Don't you think so?

Mrs. O. I am convinced of it. Poor Charles! I am much concerned for him. He must be very uneasy about her. I was thinking whether we could be of any service to him in this affair.

Oak. Was you, my love? that is very good of you.—Why, to be sure, we must endeavour to assist him. Let me see—How can we manage it? 'Gad! I have hit it.—The luckiest thought! and it will be of great service to Charles.

Mrs. O. Well, what is it? [*Eagerly.*] You know I would do anything to serve Charles, and oblige you.

[*Mildly.*

Oak. That is so kind! Lord, my dear, if you would but always consider things in this proper light, and continue this amiable temper, we should be the happiest people——

Mrs. O. I believe so: but what's your proposal?

Oak. I'm sure you'll like it.—Charles, you know, may perhaps be so lucky as to meet with this lady——

Mrs. O. True.

Oak. Now I was thinking that he might, with your leave, my dear——

Mrs. O. Well!

Oak. Bring her home here——

Mrs. O. How!

Oak. Yes, bring her home here, my dear;—it will make poor Charles's mind quite easy: and you may take her under your protection till her father comes to town.

Mrs. O. [*Start asunder.*] Amazing! this is even beyond my expectation.

Oak. Why!—what!

Mrs. O. Was there ever such assurance! [*Both rise.*] Take her under my protection! What! would you keep her under my nose? [*Goes up Stage.*

Oak. Nay, I never conceived—I thought you would have approved——

Mrs. O. What! make me your convenient woman!—

No place but my own house to serve your purposes?

[*Comes down* R.

Oak. (C.) Lord, this is the strangest misapprehension! I am quite astonished.

Mrs. O. (R. C.) Astonished! yes—confused, detected, betrayed by your vain confidence of imposing on me. Why, sure you imagine me an idiot, a driveller. Charles, indeed! yes, Charles is a fine excuse for you! The letter this morning, the letter, Mr. Oakly!

Oak. The letter! why, sure that——

Mrs. O. Is sufficiently explained. You have made it very clear to me. Now I am convinced. I have no doubt of your perfidy. But I thank you for some hints you have given me, and you may be sure I shall make use of them; nor will I rest till I have full conviction, and overwhelm you with the strongest proof of your baseness towards me.

Oak. Nay, but——

Mrs. O. Go, go! I have no doubt of your falsehood: away! [*Exit*, R.

Oak. Was there ever anything like this? Such unaccountable behavior! angry, I don't know why! jealous, of I know not what!—Hints!—hints I have given her!—What can she mean?

Enter Toilet, *crossing the Stage from* R. *to* L.

Toilet! where are you going?

Toil. To order the porter to let in no company to my lady to-day. She won't see a single soul, sir. [*Exit*, L.

Oak. What an unhappy woman! Now will she sit all day feeding on her suspicions, till she has convinced herself of the truth of them.

Enter John, *crossing the Stage from* R. *to* L.

Well, sir, what's your business?

John. Going to order the chariot, sir!—my lady's going out immediately. [*Exit*, L.

Oak. Going out! what is all this?—But every way she makes me miserable. Wild and ungovernable as the sea or the wind! made up of storms and tempests! I can't bear it; and, one way or other, I will put an end to it.

[*Exit*, R.

SCENE III.—*Lady Freelove's House.*

Enter LADY FREELOVE, R. *with a card; a* SERVANT *following.*

Lady F. [*Reading as she enters.*] *And will take the liberty of waiting on her ladyship, en cavalier, as she comes from the menége.* (C.) Does anybody wait that brought this card?

Ser. (R.) Lord Trinket's servant is in the hall, madam.

Lady F. My compliments, and I shall be glad to see his lordship.—Where is Miss Russet?

Ser. In her own chamber, madam.

Lady F. What is she doing?

Ser. Writing, I believe, madam.

Lady F. Oh, ridiculous!—scribbling to that Oakly, I suppose. [*Apart.*] Let her know, I should be glad of her company here. [*Exit Servant,* L.] It is a mighty troublesome thing to manage a simple girl, that knows nothing of the world. Harriet, like all other girls, is foolishly fond of this young fellow of her own choosing, her first love; that is to say, the first man that is particularly civil; and the first air of consequence which a young lady gives herself. Poor silly soul!—But Oakly must not have her, positively. A match with Lord Trinket will add to the dignity of the family. I must bring her into it. (R. C.) Here she comes.

Enter HARRIET, L.

Well, Harriet, still in the pouts! nay, pr'ythee, my dear little runaway girl, be more cheerful! your everlasting melancholy puts me into the vapours.

Har. (C.) Dear madam, excuse me. How can I be cheerful in my present situation? I know my father's temper so well, that I am sure this step of mine must almost distract him. I sometimes wish that I had remained in the country, let what would have been the consequence.

Lady F. Why, it is a naughty child, that's certain; but it need not be so uneasy about papa, as you know that I wrote, by last night's post, to acquaint him that his little lost sheep was safe, and that you were ready to obey his commands in every particular, except marrying that oaf, Sir Harry Beagle.—Lord! Lord! what a difference there is

between a country and a town education: Why, a London lass would have jumped out of a window into a gallant's arms, and without thinking of her father, unless it were to have drawn a few bills on him, been a hundred miles off in nine or ten hours, or perhaps out of the kingdom in twenty-four.

Har. I fear I have already been too precipitate. I tremble for the consequences.

Lady F. I swear, child, you are a downright prude. Your way of talking gives me the spleen; so full of affection, and duty, and virtue, 'tis just like a funeral sermon And yet, pretty soul! it can love.—Well, I wonder at your taste; a sneaking, simple gentleman, without a title! and when, to my knowledge, you might have a man of quality to-morrow.

Har. Perhaps so. Your ladyship must excuse me, but many a man of quality would make me miserable.

Lady F. Indeed, my dear, these antediluvian notions will never do now-a-days; and at the same time, too, those little wicked eyes of yours speak a very different language. Indeed, you have fine eyes, child! and they have made fine work with Lord Trinket.

Har. Lord Trinket! [*Contemptuously.*

Lady F. Yes, Lord Trinket; you know it as well as I do; and yet, you ill-natured thing, you will not vouchsafe him a single smile. But you must give the poor soul a little encouragement, pr'ythee do.

Har. Indeed I can't, madam; for of all mankind, Lord Trinket is my aversion.

Lady F. Why so, child? He is counted a well-bred, sensible young fellow, and the women all think him handsome.

Har. Yes, he is just polite enough to be able to be very unmannerly, with a great deal of good breeding; is just handsome enough to make him most excessively vain of his person; and has just reflection enough to finish him for a coxcomb; qualifications which are all very common among those whom your ladyship calls men of quality.

Lady F. A satirist, too! Indeed, my dear, this affectation sits very awkwardly upon you. There will be a superiority in the behavior of persons of fashion.

[*Crosses*, c.

Har. (R. C.) A superiority, indeed! for his lordship always behaves with so much insolent familiarity, that I should almost imagine he was soliciting me for other favours, rather than to pass my whole life with him.

Lady F. Innocent freedoms, child, which every fine woman expects to be taken with her, as an acknowledgment of her beauty.

Har. They are freedoms which I think no innocent woman can allow.

Lady F. Romantic to the last degree!—Why, you are in the country still, Harriet!

Enter a SERVANT, L.

Ser. My Lord Trinket, madam.

[*Exit*, L.—*Harriet retires back*, R.

Lady F. I swear, now, I have a good mind to tell him all that you have said.

Enter LORD TRINKET, L., *in boots, &c., as from the Riding-House.*

Your lordship's most obedient, humble servant.

Lord T. Your ladyship does me too much honour. Here I am *en bottine*, as you see—just come from the menége.

Lady F. (L. C.) Your lordship is always agreeable in every dress.

Lord T. (C.) Vastly obliging, Lady Freelove. Miss Russet, I am your slave. I declare, it makes me quite happy to find you together. [*Applying his eye-glass to Harriet.*] 'Pon honour, ma'am, I begin to conceive great hopes of you; and as for you, Lady Freelove, I cannot sufficiently commend your assiduity with your fair pupil. She was before possessed of every grace that nature could bestow on her, and nobody is so well qualified as your lady ship to give her the *bon ton*.

Har. Compliment and contempt all in a breath!—My lord, I am obliged to you; but, waiving my acknowledgments, give me leave ask your lordship, whether nature and the *bon ton* (as you call it) are so different, that we must give up one in order to obtain the other?

Lord T. Totally opposite, madam. The chief aim of the *bon ton* is to render persons of family different from the vulgar, for whom, indeed, nature serves very well.

For this reason it has, at various times, been ungenteel to see, to hear, to walk, to be in good health, and to have twenty other horrible perfections of nature. Nature, indeed, may do very well sometimes. It made you, for instance, and it then made something very lovely; and if you would suffer us of quality to give you the *ton*, you would be absolutely divine: but now—me—madam—me —nature never made such a thing as me.

Har. Why, indeed, I think your lordship has very few obligations to her.

Lord T. Then you really think it's all my own? I declare, now, that is a mighty genteel compliment: nay, if you begin to flatter already, you improve apace. 'Pon honour, Lady Freelove, I believe we shall make something of her at last.

Lady F. No doubt on't. It is in your lordship's power to make her a complete woman of fashion at once.

Lord T. Hum! Why, ay—

Har. Your lordship must excuse me. I am of a very tasteless disposition. I shall never bear to be carried out of nature.

Lady F. You are out of nature, now, Harriet! I am sure no woman but yourself ever objected to being carried among persons of quality. Would you believe it, my lord? here has she been a whole week in town, and would never suffer me to introduce her to a rout, an assembly, a concert, or even to court, or the opera; nay, would hardly so much as mix with a living soul that has visited me.

Lord T. No wonder, madam, you do not adopt the manners of persons of fashion, when you will not even honour them with your company. Were you to make one in our little coteries, we should soon make you sick of the boors and bumpkins of the horrid country. By-the-bye, I met a monster at the riding-house this morning, who gave me some intelligence that will surprise you, concerning your family.

Har. What intelligence?

Lady F. Who was this monster, as your lordship calls him? a curiosity, I dare say.

Lord T. This monster, madam, was formerly my head groom, and had the care of all my running-horses; but growing most abominably surly and extravagant, as you

know all these fellows do, I turned him off; and ever since my brother, Slouch Trinket, has had the care of my stud, rides all the principal matches himself, and——

Har. Dear, my lord, don't talk of your groom and your brother, but tell me the news. Do you know any thing of my father?

Lord T. Your father, madam, is now in town.—This fellow, you must know, is now groom to Sir Harry Beagle, your sweet rural swain, and informed me that his master and your father were running all over the town in quest of you; and that he himself had orders to inquire after you: for which reason, I suppose, he came to the riding-house stable to look after a horse, thinking it, to be sure, a very likely place to meet you. Your father, perhaps, is gone to seek you at the Tower, or Westminster Abbey, which is all the idea he has of London: and your faithful lover is probably cheapening a hunter, and drinking strong beer, at the Horse and Jockey, in Smithfield.

Lady F. The whole set admirably disposed of!

Har. Did not your lordship inform him where I was?

Lord T. Not I, 'pon honour, madam; that I left to their own ingenuity to discover.

Lady F. And pray, my lord, where in this town have this polite company bestowed themselves?

Lord T. They lodge, madam, of all places in the world, at the George and Blue Boar, in Holborn.

Lady F. Ha, ha, ha! The George and Blue Boar! incomparable! What, have they brought any hay or cattle to town?

Lord T. Very well, Lady Freelove, very well, indeed! There they are, like so many graziers; and there it seems they have learned that this lady is certainly in London.

Har. (c.) Do, dear madam, send a card directly to my father, informing him where I am, and that your ladyship would be glad to see him here. For my part, I dare not venture into his presence, till you have in some measure pacified him; but, for Heaven's sake, desire him not to bring that wretched fellow along with him.

[*Retires into back ground.*

Lord T. (R. C.) Wretched fellow! Oho! Courage, Milor Trinket! [*Aside.*

Lady F. (L.) I'll send immediately. Who's there?

Re-enter Servant, L.

Serv. [*Apart to Lady F.*] Sir Harry Beagle is below, madam.

Lady F. [*Apart to Serv.*] I am not at home.—Have they let him in?

Serv. Yes, madam.

Lady F. How abominably unlucky this is! Well, then, show him into my dressing-room, I will come to him there. [*Exit Servant*, L.

Lord T. (L. C.) Lady Freelove! no engagement, I hope? We won't part with you, 'pon honour.

Lady F. (L.) The worst engagement in the world—a pair of musty old prudes! Lady Formal and Miss Prate.

Lord T. (C.) O the beldams! As nauseous as ipecacuanha, 'pon honour.

Lady F. Lud, lud! what shall I do with them? why do these foolish women come troubling me now? I must wait on them in the dressing-room, and you must excuse the card, Harriet, till they are gone: I'll despatch them as soon as I can, but Heaven knows when I shall get rid of them, for they are both everlasting gossips! though the words come from her ladyship one by one, like drops from a still, while the other tiresome woman overwhelms us with a flood of impertinence. Harriet, you'll entertain his lordship till I return. [*Exit*, L.

Lord T. Gone!—'Pon honour, I am not sorry for the coming in of these old tabbies, and am much obliged to her ladyship for leaving us to such an agreeable tête-à-tête.

Har. [*Comes down*, R.] Your lordship will find me extremely bad company.

Lord T. (C.) Not in the least, my dear! We'll entertain ourselves one way or other, I'll warrant you. [*Nearer.*] 'Egad, I think it a mighty good opportunity to establish a better acquaintance with you.

Har. I don't understand you.

Lord T. No?—Why, then, I'll speak plainer.—[*Pausing and looking her full in the face with his glass.*] You are an amazing fine creature, 'pon honour.

Har. If this be your lordship's polite conversation, I shall leave you to amuse yourself in soliloquy. [*Going*, R.

Lord T. No, no, no, madam, that must not be. [*Stopping her.*] This place, my passion, the opportunity, all conspire—

Har. How, sir! you don't intend to do me any violence?

Lord T. 'Pon honour, ma'am, it will be doing great violence to myself, if I do not. You must excuse me.

[*Struggling with her,* R.

Har. Help! help! murder! help!

Lord T. Your crying will signify nothing—nobody will come. [*Struggling.*

Har. For Heaven's sake!—Sir!—My lord—

[*Noise without,* L.

Lord T. Plague on't, what a noise!—Then I must be quick. [*Still struggling.*

Har, Help! murder! help! help!

Enter CHARLES, *hastily,* L.

Charles. What do I hear? My Harriet's voice, calling for help!—Ha! [*Seeing them.*] Is it possible?—Turn, ruffian! I'll find you employment. [*Drawing.*

Lord T. You are a most impertinent scoundrel, and I'll whip you through the lungs, 'pon honour.

[*They fight. Harriet runs out,* R. *screaming help, &c.*

Re-enter LADY FREELOVE, *with* SIR HARRY BEAGLE *and Servants,* L.

Lady F. How's this?—Swords drawn in my house!—Part them—[*They are parted.*] This is the most impudent thing—

Lord T. (R.) Well, rascal, I shall find a time; I know you, sir!

Charles. (R. C.) The sooner the better: I know your lordship too.

Sir H. (R. C.) I'faith, madam, [*To Lady Freelove,*] we had like to have been in at the death.

Lady F. (L. C.) What is all this? Pray, sir, what is the meaning of your coming hither to raise this disturbance? you take my house for a brothel? [*To Charles.*

Charles. (L.) Not I, indeed, madam; but I believe his lordship does.

Lord T. Impudent scoundrel!

Lady F. Your conversation, sir, is as insolent as your behaviour. Who are you? What brought you here?

Charles. I am one, madam, always ready to draw my sword in defence of innocence in distress, and more especially in the cause of that lady I delivered from his lordship's fury: in search of whom I troubled your ladyship's house.

Lady F. Her lover, I suppose; or what?

Charles. At your ladyship's service; though not quite so violent in my passion as his lordship there.

Lord T. Impertinent rascal!

Lady F. You shall be made to repent of this insolence.

Lord T. Your ladyship may leave that to me.

Charles. Ha, ha! [*Retires back*, L.

Sir H. But, pray, what is become of the lady all this while? Why, Lady Freelove, you told me she was not here; and i'faith, I was just drawing off another way, if I had not heard the view-halloo.

Lady F. You shall see her immediately, sir! Who's there?

Enter Servant, L.

Where is Miss Russet?

Serv. Gone out, madam.

Lady F. Gone out?—Where?

Serv. I don't know, madam: but she ran down the back stairs, crying for help, crossed the servants' hall in tears, and took a chair at the door.

Lady F. Blockheads! to let her go out in a chair alone! Go and inquire after her immediately. [*Exit Servant*, L.

Sir H. (R.) Gone!—When I had just run her down! and is the little puss stole away at last?

Lady F. Sir, if you will walk in [*To Sir Harry,*] with his lordship and me, perhaps you may hear some tidings of her; though it is most probable she may be gone to her father. I don't know any other friend she has in town.

Charles. [*Crosses down* L.] I am heartily glad she is gone. She is safer any where than in this house.

Lady. F. Mighty well, sir!—My lord, Sir Harry,—I attend you.

Lord T. You shall hear from me, sir! [*To Charles.*

Charles. Very well, my lord.

Sir H. Stole away !—plague on't—stole away !

[*Exeunt Sir Harry and Lord Trinket*, R.

Lady F. (R.) Before I follow the company, give me leave to tell you, sir, that your behaviour here has been most extraordinary—

Charles. (L.) My treatment here, madam, has indeed been very extraordinary.

Lady F. Indeed !—Well, no matter—permit me to acquaint you, sir, that that there lies your way out, [*Points* L.] and that the greatest favour you can do me, is to leave the house immediately.

Charles. That your ladyship may depend on. Since you have put Miss Russet to flight, you may be sure of not being troubled with my company. I'll after her immediately.

Lady F. If she has any regard for her reputation, she'll never put herself into such hands as yours.

Charles. Oh, madam, there can be no doubt of her regard for that, by her leaving your ladyship.

Lady F. Leave my house.

Charles. Directly—a charming house ; and a charming lady of the house too !—Ha, ha, ha !

Lady F. Vulgar fellow !

Charles. Fine lady !

[*Exeunt Lady F.*, R., *and Charles*, L.

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Lady Freelove's House.*

Enter LADY FREELOVE *and* LORD TRINKET, R.

Lord T. Doucement, doucement, my dear Lady Freelove ! Excuse me, I meant no harm, 'pon honour.

Lady F. (R. C.) Indeed, indeed, my Lord Trinket, this is absolutely intolerable ! What, to offer rudeness to a young lady in my house ! What will the world say of it ?

Lord T. (L. C.) Just what the world pleases—it does

not signify a doit what they say. However, I ask pardon; but, egad, I thought it was the best way. Deuce take Sir Harry, and t'other scoundrel too! That they should come driving hither just at so critical an instant! and that the wild little thing should take wing, and fly away the Lord knows whither!

Lady F. Come, come, my lord, a truce with your reflections on my niece: let us consider what is best to be done.

Lord T. E'en just what your ladyship thinks proper;—for my part, I am entirely *dérangée*.

Lady F. Will you submit to be governed by me, then?

Lord T. I'll be all obedience—your ladyship's slave, 'pon honour.

Lady F. Why, then, as this is rather an ugly affair in regard to me, as well as your lordship, and may make some noise, I think it absolutely necessary that you should wait on her father, palliate matters as well as you can, and make a formal repetition of your proposal of marriage.

Lord T. Your ladyship is perfectly in the right—you are quite *au fait* of the affair. It shall be done immediately; and then your reputation will be safe, and my conduct justified to all the world. But should the old rustic continue as stubborn as his daughter, your ladysnip, I hope, has no objections to my being a little *rusée*, for I must have her, 'pon honour.

Lady F. Do what you will, I wash my hands of it:—she's out of my care now, you know. But you must beware of your rivals. One, you know, is in the house with her; and the other will lose no opportunities of getting to her.

Lord T. As to the fighting gentleman, I shall cut out work for him in his own way. I'll send him a *petit billet* to-morrow morning, and then there can be no great difficulty in outwitting her bumpkin father and the baronet.

Enter Servant, L.

Serv. Captain O'Cutter, to wait on your ladyship.

Lady F. O the hideous fellow! the Irish sailor-man, for whom I prevailed on your lordship to get the post of regulating captain. I suppose he is come to load me with his odious thanks. I won't be troubled with him now.

Lord T. Let him in, by all means. He is the best crea-

ture to laugh at in nature. He is a perfect sea-monster, and always looks and talks as if he was upon deck. Besides, a thought strikes me—he may be of use.

Lady F. Well—send the creature up, then.

[*Exit Servant*, L.

But what fine thought is this?

Lord T. A *coup de maitre*, 'pon honour! I intend—but, hush! here the porpus comes.

Enter Captain O'Cutter, L.

Lady F. Captain, your humble servant! I am very glad to see you.

O'Cut. (L.) I am much obliged to you, my lady! Upon my conscience, the wind favours me at all points. I had no sooner got under weigh, to tank your ladyship, but I have borne down upon my noble friend, his lordship, too. I hope your lordship's well?

Lord T. Very well, I thank you, captain.—But you seem to be hurt in the service: what is the meaning of that patch over your right eye?

O'Cut. Some advanced wages from my new post, my lord! This pressing is hot work, though it entitles us to smart money.

Lady F. (C.) And pray in what perilous adventure did you get that scar, captain?

O'Cut. Quite out of my element, indeed, my lady. I got it in an engagement by land. A day or two ago, I spied three stout fellows, belonging to a merchantman. They made down Wapping. I immediately gave my lads the signal to chase, and we bore down right upon them. They tacked, and lay to—We gave them a thundering broadside, which they resaved like men: and one of them made use of small arms, which carried off the weathermost corner of Ned Gage's hat; so I immediately stood in with him, and raked him, but resaved a wound on my starboard eye, from the stock of the pistol. However, we took them all, and they now lie under the hatches, with fifty more, aboard a tender, off the Tower.

Lord. T. Well done, noble captain!—But however, you will soon have better employment, for I think the next step to your present post is commonly a ship.

O'Cut. The sooner the better, my lord! Honest Te-

rence O'Cutter shall never flinch, I warrant you; and has seen as much sea-sarvice as any man in the navy.

Lord T. (L. C.) You may depend on my good offices, captain! [*Lady F. goes* R.] But in the mean time, it is in your power to do me a favour.

O'Cut. A favour, my lord?—your lordship does me honour. I would go round the world, from one end to the other, by day or by night, to sarve your lordship, or my good lady there.

Lord T. Dear madam, the luckiest thought in nature! [*Apart to Lady F.*] The favour I have to ask of you, captain, need not carry you so far out of your way. The whole affair is, that there are a couple of impudent fellows at an inn in Holborn, who have affronted me, and you would oblige me infinitely, by pressing them into his majesty's service.

Lrdy F. Now I understand—Admirable! [*Apart.*

O'Cut. With all my heart, my lord, and tank you too, 'fait. But, by-the-bye, I hope they are not housekeepers, or freemen of the city. There's the devil to pay in meddling with them. They boder one so about liberty, and property, and stuff.—It was but t'other day, that Jack Trowser was carried before my lord mayor, and lost about a twelvemonth's pay for nothing at all at all.

Lord T. I'll take care you shall be brought into no trouble. These fellows were formerly my grooms. If you'll call on me in the morning, I'll go with you to the place.

O'Cut. I'll be with your lordship, and bring with me four or five as pretty boys as you'll wish to clap your two lucking eyes upon of a summer's day.

Lord T. I am much obliged to you.—But, captain, I have another little favour to beg of you.

O'Cut. Upon my shoul I'll do it.

Lord T. What, before you know it?

O'Cut. Fore and aft, my lord!

Lord T. A gentleman has offended me in a point of honour——

O'Cut. Shoot him!

Lord T. Will you carry him a letter from me?

O'Cut. Indeed and I will:—and I'll take you in tow, too; and you shall engage him yard-arm and yard-arm.

Lord T. Why, then, captain, you'll come a little earlier

to-morrow morning than you proposed, that you may attend him with my billet, before you proceed on the other affair.

O'Cut. Never fear it, my lord.—Your sarvant!—My ladyship, your humble sarvant!

Lady F. (L.) Captain, your's—Pray give my service to my friend Mrs. O'Cutter. How does she do?

O'Cut. I tank your ladyship's axing—The dear creature is purely tight and well.

Lord T. (C.) How many children have you, captain?

O'Cut. Four, and please your lordship, and another upon the stocks.

Lord T. When it is launched, I hope to be at the christening.—I'll stand godfather, captain.

O'Cut. Your lordship's very good. [*Turns to Lady F.*] I beg pardon, but two godfathers will be wanted; would your ladyship like to be the other?

Lord T. Well, you'll come to-morrow?

O'Cut. Ay, my lord, and every day next week.—Little Terence O'Cutter never fails, fait, when a throat is to be cut. [*Exit*, L.

Lady F. Ha, ha, ha! But sure you don't intend to ship off both her father and her country lover for the Indies?

Lord T. O no! Only let them contemplate the inside of a ship, for a day or two; and in the mean while measures may be concerted to carry off the girl.

Re-enter SERVANT, L.

Serv. (L.) Mrs. Oakly, madam, is at the door, in her chariot, and desires to have the honour of speaking to your ladyship on particular business.

Lord T. (C.) Mrs. Oakly! what can that jealous-pated woman want with you?

Lady F. (C.) No matter what.—I hate her mortally.—Let her in. [*Exit Servant*, L.

Lord T. What wind blows her hither?

Lady F. A wind that must blow us some good.

Lord T. How?—I was amazed you chose to see her.

Lady F. How can you be so slow of apprehension!—She comes, you may be sure, on some occasion relating to this girl: in order to assist young Oakly, perhaps, to soothe me and gain intelligence, and so forward the match; but

I'll forbid the banns, I warrant you.—Whatever she wants, I'll draw some sweet mischief out of her.—But away! away!—I think I hear her—slip down the back stairs—or —stay, now I think on't, go out this way—meet her—and be sure to make her a very respectful bow, as you go out.

Lord T. Hush! here she is!

Enter Mrs. Oakly, L.—*Lord Trinket bows formally, and exit,* L.

Mrs. O. I beg pardon for giving your ladyship this trou ble.

Lady F. I am always glad of the honour of seeing Mrs. Oakly. [*Both sit,* C.

Mrs. O. There is a letter, madam, just come from the country, which has occasioned some alarm in our family. It comes from Mr. Russet——

Lady F. Mr. Russet!

Mrs. O. Yes, from Mr. Russet, madam; and is chiefly concerning his daughter. As she has the honour of being related to your ladyship, I took the liberty of waiting on you.

Lady F. She is, indeed, as you say, madam, a relation of mine; but after what has happened, I scarce know how to acknowledge her.

Mrs. O. Has she been so much to blame, then?

Lady F. So much, madam!—Only judge for yourself. —Though she had been so indiscreet, not to say indecent in her conduct, as to elope from her father, I was in hopes to have hushed up that matter, for the honour of our family.—But she has run away from me too, madam:—went off in the most abrupt manner, not an hour ago.

Mrs. O. You surprise me. Indeed, her father, by his letter, seems apprehensive of the worst consequences.— But does your ladyship imagine any harm has happened?

Lady F. I can't tell—I hope not.—But indeed she's a strange girl. You know, madam, young women can't be too cautious in their conduct.. She is, I am sorry to declare it, a very dangerous person to take into a family.

Mrs. O. Indeed! [*Alarmed.*

Lady F. If I was to say all I know——

Mrs. O. Why, sure your ladyship knows of nothing that has been carried on clandestinely between her and Mr. Oakly? [*In disorder.*

Lady F. Mr. Oakly?

Mrs. O. Mr. Oakly—no, not Mr. Oakly—that is, not my husband—I don't mean him—not him, but his nephew—young Mr. Oakly.

Lady F. Jealous of her husband! So, so! now I know my game. [*Aside.*

Mrs. O. But pray, madam, give me leave to ask, was there anything very particular in her conduct while she was in your ladyship's house?

Lady F. Why, really, considering she was here scarce a week, her behaviour was rather mysterious;—letters and messages, to and fro, between her and I don't know who.—I suppose you know that Mr. Oakly's nephew has been here, madam?

Mrs. O. I was not sure of it. Has he been to wait on your ladyship already on this occasion?

Lady F. To wait on me!—The expression is much too polite for the nature of his visit.—My Lord Trinket, the nobleman whom you met as you came in, had, you must know, madam, some thoughts of my niece, and, as it would have been an advantageous match, I was glad of it: but I believe, after what he has been witness to this morning, he will drop all thoughts of it.

Mrs. O. I am sorry that any relation of mine should so far forget himself——

Lady F. It's no matter—his behaviour, indeed, as well as the young lady's, was pretty extraordinary—and yet, after all, I don't believe he is the object of her affections.

Mrs. O. Ha! [*Much alarmed.*

Lady F. She has certainly an attachment somewhere, a strong one; but his lordship, who was present all the time, was convinced, as well as myself, that Mr. Oakly's nephew was rather a convenient friend, a kind of go-between, than the lover.—Bless me, madam, you change co-colour!—you seem uneasy! What's the matter?

Mrs. O. Nothing—madam—nothing—a little shocked that my husband should behave so.

Lady F. Your husband, madam!

Mrs. O. His nephew, I mean.—His unpardonable rudeness—But I am not well—I am sorry I have given your ladyship so much trouble—I'll take my leave.

Lady F. I declare, madam, you frighten me. Your be-

ing so visibly affected, makes me quite uneasy. I hope I have not said anything—I really don't believe your husband is in fault. Men, to be sure, allow themselves strange liberties—But I think, nay, I am sure, it cannot be so—It is impossible! Don't let what I have said have any effect on you.

Mrs. O. No, it has not—I have no idea of such a thing. [*Rise.*] Your ladyship's most obedient—[*Going, returns.*] But sure, madam, you have not heard—or don't know anything——

Lady F. [*Takes her hand.*] Come, come, Mrs. Oakly, I see how it is, and it would not be kind to say all I know. I dare not tell you what I have heard. Only be on your guard—there can be no harm in that. Do you be against giving the girl any countenance, and see what effect it has.

Mrs. O. I will—I am much obliged—But does it appear to your ladyship, then, that Mr. Oakly——

Lady F. No, not at all—nothing in't, I dare say—I would not create uneasiness in a family—but I am a woman myself, have been married, and can't help feeling for you.—But don't be uneasy; there's nothing in't, I dare say.

Mrs. O. I think so.—Your ladyship's humble servant.

Lady F. Your servant, madam.—Pray don't be alarmed: I must insist on your not making yourself uneasy.

Mrs. O. Not at all alarmed—not in the least uneasy—your most obedient. Oh, Mr. Oakly! [*Exit,* L.

Lady F. Ha, ha, ha! There she goes, brimful of anger and jealousy, to vent it all on her husband.—Mercy on the poor man!

Re-enter Lord Trinket, L. S. E.

Bless me, my lord, I thought you was gone!

Lord T. Ha, ha! Only in the next room. My curiosity would not let me stir a step further. I heard it all, and was never more diverted in my life, 'pon honour. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady F. How the silly creature took it.—Ha, ha, ha!

Lord T. Ha, ha, ha!—My dear Lady Freelove, you have a deal of ingenuity, a deal of esprit, 'pon honour.

Lady F. A little shell thrown into the enemy's works, that's all.

Both. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Lady F. But I must leave you—I have twenty visits to pay. You'll let me know how you succeed in your secret expedition.

Lord T. That you may depend on.

Lady F. Remember, then, that to-morrow morning I expect to see you. At present, your lordship will excuse me. [*Exeunt, Lord T.*, L., *Lady F.*, R.

SCENE II.—*Mr. Oakly's House.*

Enter HARRIET, L., *following* WILLIAM.

Har. (L. C.) Not at home! Are you sure that Mrs. Oakly is not at home, sir?

Wil. She is just gone out, madam.

Har. I have something of consequence—If you will give me leave, sir, I will wait till she returns.

Wil. You would not see her if you did, madam. She has given positive orders not to be interrupted with any company to-day.

Har. Sure, sir, if you were to let her know that I had particular business——

Wil. I should not dare to trouble her, indeed, madam.

Har. How unfortunate this is! What can I do?—pray, sir, can I see Mr. Oakly, then?

Wil. Yes, madam: I'll acquaint my master, if you please.

Har. Pray do, sir.

Wil. Will you favour me with your name, madam?

Har. Be pleased, sir, to let him know that a lady desires to speak with him.

Wil. I shall, madam. [*Exit*, R.

Har. I wish I could have seen Mrs. Oakly. What an unhappy situation am I reduced to, by my father's obstinate perseverance to force me into a marriage my soul abhors.

Enter OAKLY, R.

Oak. [*At entering.*] Where is this lady? [*Seeing her.*]—Bless me, Miss Russet, is it you?—Was ever anything so unlucky? [*Aside.*] Is it possible, madam, that I see you here?

Har. It is too true, sir; and the occasion on which I am now to trouble you, is so much in need of an apology, that——

Oak. Pray make none, madam.—If my wife should return before I get her out of the house again! [*Aside.*

Har. I dare say, sir, you are not quite a stranger to the attachment your nephew has professed to me.

Oak. I am not, madam.—I hope Charles has not been guilty of any baseness towards you. If he has, I'll never see his face again.

Har. I have no cause to accuse him—But——

Oak. But what, madam? Pray be quick?—The very person in the world I would not have seen! [*Aside.*

Har. You seem uneasy, sir!

Oak. No, nothing at all—Pray go on, madam.

Har. I am at present, sir, through a concurrence of strange accidents, in a very unfortunate situation, and do not know what will become of me without your assistance.

Oak. [*Looking about alarmed and agitated.*] I'll do every thing in my power to serve you. I know of your leaving your father, by a letter we have had from him. Pray let me know the rest of your story.

Har. My story, sir, is very short. When I left my father's, I came immediately to London, and took refuge with a relation; where, instead of meeting with the protection I expected, I was alarmed with the most infamous designs upon my honour. It is not an hour ago since your nephew rescued me from the attempts of a villain. I tremble to think that I left him actually engaged in a duel.

Oak. He is very safe. He has just sent home the chariot from the St. Alban's tavern, where he dines to-day.—But what are your commands for me, madam?

Har. The favour, sir, I would now request of you is, that you would suffer me to remain, for a few days, in your house.

Oak. Madam!

Har. And that, in the mean time, you will use your utmost endeavours to reconcile me to my father, without his forcing me into a marriage with Sir Harry Beagle.

Oak. This is the most perplexing situation!—Why did not Charles take care to bestow you properly?

Har. It is most probable, sir, that I should not have con

sented to such a measure myself. The world is but too apt to censure, even without a cause: and if you are so kind as to admit me into your house, I must desire not to consider Mr. Oakly in any other light than as your nephew.

Oak. What an unlucky circumstance!—Upon my soul, madam, I would do anything to serve you—but being in my house creates a difficulty, that——

Har. I hope, sir, you do not doubt the truth of what I have told you?

Oak. I religiously believe every tittle of it, madam; but I have particular family considerations, that——

Har. Sure, sir, you cannot suspect me to be base enough to form any connexions in your family contrary to your inclinations, while I am living in your house!

Oak. Such connexions, madam, would do me and all my family great honour. I never dreamt of any scruples on that account.—What can I do?—Let me see—let me see—suppose—— [*Pausing.*

Enter MRS. OAKLY, M. D.

Mrs. O. I am sure I heard the voice of a woman, conversing with my husband—Ha! [*Seeing Harriet.*] It is so indeed! Let me contain myself—I'll listen.

[*Aside—stands in background.*

Har. (c.) I see, sir, you are not inclined to serve me—good heaven! what am I reserved to?—Why, why did I leave my father's house, to expose myself to greater distresses? [*Ready to weep.*

Oak. (c.) I would do anything for your sake, indeed I would. So pray be comforted, and I'll think of some proper place to bestow you in.

Mrs. O. So! so!

Har. What place can be so proper as your own house?

Oak. My dear madam, I—I——

Mrs. O. My dear madam!—Mighty well!

[*Aside, and exit,* M. D.

Oak. Hush!—hark!—what noise?

Har. I heard no noise.

Oak. But I did, though! [*Goes back and listens.*] No, nothing. [*Comes forward again.*] But I'll be plain with you, madam; we may be interrupted.—The family consideration I hinted at, is nothing else than my wife. She is a lit-

tle unhappy in her temper, madam;—and if you were to be admitted into the house, I don't know what would be the consequence.

Mrs. O. [*Peeping in again.*] Very fine! [*Aside.*

Har. My behaviour, sir!

Oak. My dear life, it would be impossible for you to behave in such a manner as not to give her suspicion.

Har. But if your nephew, sir, took everything upon himself——

Oak. Still that would not do, madam.—Why, this very morning, when the letter came from your father, though I positively denied any knowledge of it, and Charles owned it, yet it was almost impossible to pacify her.

Har. What shall I do?—What will become of me?

Oak Why, lookye, my dear madam, since my wife is so strong an objection, it is absolutely impossible for me to take you into the house. Nay, if I had not known she was gone out just before you came, I should be uneasy at your being here, even now. So we must manage as well as we can.—I'll take a private lodging for you a little way off, unknown to Charles, or my wife, or anybody; and if Mrs. Oakly should discover it at last, why, the whole matter will light upon Charles, you know.

Mrs. O. Upon Charles!

Har. How unhappy is my situation! [*Weeping.*] I am ruined forever.

Oak. Ruined! Not at all. Such a thing as this has happened to many a young lady before you, and all has been well again.—Keep up your spirits! I'll contrive, if I possibly can, to visit you every day.

Mrs. O. [*Advances between them.*] Will you so? Oh, Mr. Oakly! have I discovered you at last? I'll visit you, indeed! And you, my dear madam, I'll——

Har. Madam, I don't understand——

Mrs. O. I understand the whole affair, and have understood it for some time past.—You shall have a private lodging, miss!—It is the fittest place for you, I believe.—How dare you look me in the face?

Oak. For heaven's sake, my love, don't be so violent.—You are quite wrong in this affair—you don't know who you are talking to. This lady is a person of fashion.

Mrs. O. Fine fashion, indeed! to seduce other women's husbands.

Har. Dear madam, how can you imagine——

Oak. I tell you, my dear, this is the young woman that Charles——

Mrs. O. Mighty well! but that won't do, sir!—Did not I hear you lay the whole intrigue together? Did not I hear your fine plot of throwing all the blame upon Charles?

Oak. Nay, be cool a moment.—You must know, my dear, that the letter which came this morning related to this lady——

Mrs. O. I know it.

Oak. And since that, it seems, Charles has been so fortunate as to——

Mrs. O. Oh, you deceitful man!—That trick is too stale to pass again with me.—It is plain now, what you meant by your proposing to take her into the house this morning. —But the gentlewoman could introduce herself, I see.

Oak. Fie! fie! my dear; she came on purpose to inquire for you.

Mrs. O. For me!—better and better! Did not she watch her opportunity, and come to you just as I went out? But I am obliged to you for your visit, madam. It is sufficiently paid. Pray, don't let me detain you.

Oak. For shame! for shame! Mrs. Oakly! How can you be so absurd? Is this proper behaviour to a lady of her character?

Mrs. O. I have heard her character. Go, my fine runaway madam! Now you have eloped from your family, and run away from your aunt! Go!—You shan't stay here, I promise you.

Oak. Pr'ythee be quiet. You don't know what you are doing. She shall stay.

Mrs. O. She shan't stay a minute.

Oak. She shall stay a minute, an hour, a day, a week, a month, a year!—'Sdeath, madam, she shall stay for ever, if I choose it.

Mrs. O. How!

Har. For heaven's sake, sir, let me go. I am frightened to death.

Oak. Don't be afraid, madam!—She shall stay, I insist upon it.

Rus. [*Without*, L.] I tell you, sir, I will go up. I am

sure the lady is here, and nothing shall hinder me.

Har. O, my father! my father! [*Faints.*

Oak. See! she faints. [*Catches her.*] Ring the bell!

Mrs. O. [*Sotto voce; and pacing the room in a rage.*] Ring the devil!

Oak. Who's there?

Mrs. O. What, take her into your arms too?—I have no patience!

Enter Russet, L.

Rus. Where is this—ha! fainting! [*Runs to her.*] Oh, my dear Harriet! my child! my child!

Oak. Your coming so abruptly shocked her spirits. But she revives. How do you do, madam!

Har. (L. C.) [*To Russet.*] Oh, sir!

Rus. (L. C.) Oh, my dear girl! how could you run away from your father, that loves you with such fondness? But I was sure I should find you here——

Mrs. O. (R.) There—there!—sure he should find her here! Did I not tell you so?—Are you not a wicked man, to carry on such base underhand doings with a gentleman's daughter?

Rus. Let me tell you, sir, whatever you may think of the matter, I shall not easily put up with this behaviour.—How durst you encourage my daughter to an elopement, and receive her into your house?

Mrs. O. There, mind that!—The thing is as plain as the light.

Oak. I tell you, you misunderstand—

Rus. Look you, Mr. Oakly, I shall expect satisfaction from your family for so gross an affront.—Zounds, sir, I am not to be used ill by any man in England.

Har. My dear sir, I can assure you—

Rus. Hold your tongue, girl! You'll put me in a passion.

Oak. Sir, this is all a mistake

Rus. A mistake! Did not I find her in your house?

Oak. Upon my soul, she has not been in my house above——

Mrs. O. Did not I hear you say, you would take her a lodging, a private lodging?

Oak. Yes, but that——

Rus. Has not this affair been carried on a long time in spite of my teeth?

Oak. Sir, I never troubled myself—

Mrs. O. Never troubled yourself!—Did not you insist on her staying in the house, whether I would or no?

Oak. No.

Rus. Did not you send to meet her, when she came to town?

Oak. No.

Mrs. O. Did not you deceive me about the letter this morning?

Oak. No—no—no—I tell you, no!

Mrs. O. Yes—yes—yes—I tell you, yes!

Rus. Shan't I believe my own eyes?

Mrs. O. Shan't I believe my own ears?

Oak. I tell you, you are deceived.

Rus. Zounds, sir, I'll have satisfaction.

Mrs. O. I'll stop these fine doings, I warrant you.

Oak. 'Sdeath, you will not let me speak—and you are both alike, I think.—I wish you were married to one another, with all my heart.

Mrs. O. Mighty well! mighty well!

Rus. I shall soon find a time to talk with you.

Oak. Find a time to talk! you have talked enough now for all your lives.

Mrs. O. Very fine! Come along, sir! Leave that lady with her father. Now she is in the properest hands. [*Exit*, R.

Oak. I wish I could leave you in his hands. [*Going, returns.*] One word with you, sir!—The height of your passion, and Mrs. Oakly's strange misapprehension of this whole affair, makes it impossible to explain matters to you at present. I will do it when you please, and how you please. [*Exit*, R.

Rus. Yes, yes; I'll have satisfaction. [*Crosses to* R.] So, madam! I have found you at last.—You have made a fine confusion here.

Har. I have indeed been the innocent cause of a great deal of confusion.

Rus. (c.) Innocent!—What business had you to be running hither after——

Har. My dear sir, you misunderstand the whole affair. h ave not been in this house half an hour.

Rus. Zounds, girl, don't put me in a passion!—You know I love you—but a lie puts me in a passion. But come along—we'll leave this house directly. [*Charles sings without,* L.] Hey-day! what now?

Enter Charles, *drunk,* L.

Charles. [*Sings.*] 'But my wine neither nurses nor babies can bring,
And a big-bellied bottle's a mighty good thing.'
What's here? a woman? Harriet! impossible! My dearest, sweetest Harriet! I have been looking all over the town for you, and at last—when I was tired—and weary—and disappointed—why then the honest Major and I sat down together to drink your health in pint bumpers. [*Running to her.*

Rus. Stand off?—How dare you take any liberty with my daughter before me? Zounds, sir, I'll be the death of you.

Charles. Ha! 'Squire Russet, too!—You jolly old cock, how do you do?—But, Harriet! my dear girl! [*Taking hold of her.*] My life, my soul, my——

Rus. Let her go, sir—come away, Harriet!—Leave him this instant, or I'll tear you asunder. [*Pulling her.*

Har. There needs no violence to tear me from a man who could disguise himself in such a gross manner, at a time when he knew I was in the utmost distress.

[*Disengages herself, leaves her scarf in Charles's hand, and exit with Russet,* L.

Charles. [*Still grasping the scarf.*] Only hear me, sir—madam!—my dear Harriet—Mr. Russet—gone!—she's gone!—and, 'egad, in very ill humour, and in very bad company!—I'll go after her—but hold!—I shall only make it worse—as I did—now I recollect—once before. How the devil came they here? Who would have thought of finding her in my own house?—My head turns round with conjectures.—I believe I am drunk—very drunk—so, 'egad, I'll e'en go and sleep myself sober, and then inquire the meaning of all this. For

'I love Sue, and Sue loves me,' &c.

[*Exit singing,* R.

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Oakly's House.*

Enter CHARLES *and* MAJOR OAKLY, L.

Maj. O. Poor Charles! What a scene of confusion! I would give the world to have been there.

Charles. And I would give the world to have been any where else.—May wine be my poison, if ever I am drunk again! [*Crosses to* L.

Maj. O. Ay, ay, so every man says the next morning.

Charles. Where, where can she be? Her father would hardly carry her back to Lady Freelove's, and he has no house in town himself, nor Sir Harry.—I don't know what to think—I'll go in search of her, though I don't know where to direct myself.

Enter WILLIAM, L.

Wil. A gentleman, sir, that calls himself Captain O'Cut ter, desires to speak with you.

Charles. Don't trouble me—I'll see nobody—I'm not at home—

Wil. The gentleman says he has very particular busi-ness, and he must see you.

Charles. What's his name? Who did you say?

Wil. Captain O'Cutter, sir.

Charles. Captain O'Cutter! I never heard of him be-fore. Do you know any thing of him, Major?

Maj. O. (R.) Not I—But you hear he has particular busi-ness. I'll leave the room.

Charles. He can have no business that need be a se-cret to you. Desire the captain to walk up.

[*Exit William*, L.

Enter CAPTAIN O'CUTTER, L.

O'Cut. Jontlemen, your sarvant. Is either of your names Charles Oakly, Esq.?

Charles. (c.) Charles Oakly, sir, is my name, if you have any business with it.

O'Cut. Avast, avast, my dear!—I have a little business

with your name; but as I was to let nobody know it, I can't mention it till you clear the decks, fait.

[*Pointing to the Major.*

Charles. This gentleman, sir, is my most intimate friend; and any thing that concerns me, may be mentioned before him.

O'Cut. Oh, if he's your friend, my dear, we may do all above board. It's only about your deciding a deferance with my Lord Trinket. He wants to show you a little warm work; and, as I was steering this way, he desired me to fetch you this letter. [*Gives a letter.*

Maj. O. (R. C.) How, sir, a challenge!

O'Cut. (C.) Yes, fait, a challenge. I am to be his lordship's second; and if you are fond of a hot birth, and will come along with that jontleman, we'll all go to it together, and make a little line of battle ahead of our own, my dear.

Charles. [*Reads.*] Ha! what's this? [*Aside.*] This may be useful.

Maj. O. Sir, I am infinitely obliged to you.—[*Aside.*] A rare fellow this!—Yes, yes, I'll meet all the good company. I'll be there in my waistcoat and pumps, and take a morning's breathing with you. Are you very fond of fighting, sir?

O'Cut. Indeed, and I am; I love it better than grog.

Maj. O. But, pray, sir, how are you interested in this difference? Do you know what it is about?

O'Cut. Oh, the devil burn me, not I! What signifies what it's about, you know, so we do but tilt a little?

Maj. O. What, fight, and know not for what?

O'Cut. When the signal's out for engaging, what signifies talking?

Maj. O. I fancy, sir, a duel's a common breakfast with you. I'll warrant, now, you have been engaged in many such affairs.

O'Cut. Upon my shoul, and I have: sea or land, it's all one to little Terence O'Cutter. When I was last in Dublin, I fought one jontleman for cheating me out of a thousand pounds; I fought two of the Mermaid's crew about Sally Maguire; tree about politics; and one about the play-house in Smock Alley. But, upon my fait, since I am in England, I have done nothing at all.

Charles. [*Aside.*] This is lucky—but my transport will

discover me.—Will you be so kind, sir, [*To O'Cutter,*] as to make my compliments to his lordship, and assure him that I shall do myself the honour of waiting on him.

O'Cut. Indeed, and I will—Arrah, my dear, won't you come too? [*To Major Oakly.*

Maj. O. Depend upon it, captain.—[*Aside.*] A very extraordinary fellow!

Charles. [*Aside.*] Now to get my intelligence.—I think the time, sir, his lordship appoints in his letter, is—a—

O'Cut. (L. C.) You say right—six o'clock.

Charles. And the place—a—a—is—I think, behind Montague House?

O'Cut. No, my dear!—Avast, by the ring in Hyde Park, 'fait—I settled it there myself, for fare of interruption.

Charles. True, as you say, the ring in Hyde-park—I had forgot—Very well, I'll not fail you, sir.

O'Cut. Devil burn me, nor I. Upon my shoul, little Terence O'Cutter will see fair play, or he'll know the reason—and so, my dear, your sarvant.—You'll not forget to come, my dear? [*Exit,* L.

Maj. O. Ha, ha, ha! What a fellow!—He loves fighting like a game cock.

Charles. Oh, uncle, the luckiest thing in the world!

Maj. O. What, to have the chance of being run through the body? I desire no such good fortune.

Charles. Wish me joy, wish me joy! I have found her, my dear girl, my Harriet!—She is at an inn in Holborn, Major!

Maj. O. Ay! how do you know?

Charles. Why, this dear, delightful, charming, blundering captain, has delivered me a wrong letter.

Maj. O. A wrong letter!

Charles. Yes, a letter from Lord Trinket to Lady Freelove.

Maj. O. The devil! What are the contents?

Charles. The news I told you just now, that she's at an inn in Holborn; and, besides, an excuse from my lord, for not waiting on her ladyship this morning, according to his promise, as he shall be entirely taken up with his design upon Harriet.

Maj. O. So! so!—A plot between the lord and the lady.

Charles. There! read, read, man! [*Gives the letter.*

Maj. O. [*Reading.*] Um—um—um—Very fine! What do you propose doing?

Charles. To go thither immediately.

Maj. O. Then you shall take me with you. Who knows what his lordship's designs may be? I begin to suspect foul play.

Charles. No, no; pray mind your own business. If I find there is any need of your assistance, I'll send for you.

Maj. O. You'll manage this affair like a boy, now—Go on rashly, with noise and bustle, and fury, and get yourself into another scrape.

Charles. No, no: Let me alone; I'll go incog—leave my chariot at some distance, proceed prudently, and take care of myself, I warrant you. I did not imagine that I should ever rejoice at receiving a challenge; but this is the most fortunate accident that could possibly have happened. B'ye, b'ye, uncle! [*Exit hastily,* L.

Maj. O. I don't half approve of this: and yet I can hardly suspect his lordship of any very deep designs, neither.—Charles may easily outwit him.—Harkye, William!

[*At seeing William.*

Re-enter William, L., *crossing.*

Wil. (c.) Sir!

Maj. O. Where's my brother?

Wil. In his study, sir.

Maj. O. Is he alone?

Wil. Yes, sir.

Maj. O. And how is he, William?

Wil. Pretty well, I believe, sir.

Maj. O. Ay, ay; but is he in good humour, or——

Wil. I never meddle in family affairs, not I, sir.

[*Exit,* R.

Maj. O. Well said, William!—No bad hint for me, perhaps!—What a strange world we live in! No two people in it love one another better than my brother and sister, and yet the bitterest enemies could not torment each other more heartily. However, yesterday, to give him his due, he behaved like a man. Keep it up, brother! keep it up! or it's all over with you. Since mischief is on foot,

I'll even set it forward on all sides. I'll in to him directly, read him one of my morning lectures, and persuade him, if I possibly can, to go out with me immediately; or work him to some open act of rebellion against the sovereign authority of his lady wife. Zounds, brother! rant, and roar, and rave, and turn the house out of the window! If I was a husband!—'Sdeath, what a pity it is that nobody knows how to manage a wife but a bachelor. [*Exit*, L.

SCENE II.—*The George and Blue Boar Inn.*

Enter HARRIET, L.

Har. (L.) What will become of me? Among all my distresses, I must confess that Charles's behaviour yesterday is not the least. So wild! so given up to excesses! And yet—(L. C.) I am ashamed to own it even to myself—I love him; and death itself shall not prevail on me to give my hand to Sir Harry. But here he comes! What shall I do with him?

Enter SIR HARRY BEAGLE, R.

Sir H. (R.) Your servant, miss.—What! not speak!—Bashful, mayhap. Why, then, I will—Lookye, miss, I am a man of few words—(C.) what signifies haggling; it looks just like a dealer.—What d'ye think of me for a husband? I am a tight young fellow—sound wind and limb—free from all natural blemishes—Rum all over, damme.

Har. Sir, I don't understand you. Speak English, and I'll give you an answer.

Sir H. English! Why, so I do—and good plain English, too.—What d'ye think of me for a husband? That's English—an't it? I know none of your French lingo, none of your parlyvoos, not I.—What d'ye think of me for a husband? The squire says you shall marry me.

Har. (L. C.) [*Aside.*] What shall I say to him? I had best be civil.—I think, sir, you deserve a much better wife, and beg——

Sir H. Better! No, no,—though you're so knowing, I'm not to be taken in so. You're a fine thing—your points are all good.

Har. Sir Harry, sincerity is above all ceremony! Excuse me, if I declare I never will be your wife.

Sir H. Hey! how! what! be off?—Why, it's a match, miss! It's done and done on both sides.

Har. For heaven's sake, sir, withdraw your claim to me.—I never can be prevailed on—indeed, I can't—

Sir H. What, make a match and then draw stakes! That's doing of nothing—Play or pay all the world over.

Har. I am determined not to marry you, at all events.

Sir H. But your father's determined you shall, miss—so the odds are on my side. I am not quite sure of my horse, but I have the rider hollow.

Har. Your horse, sir! dy'e take me for—but I forgive you. I beseech you, come into my proposal; it will be better for us both in the end.

Sir H. I can't be off.

Har. Let me entreat you!

Sir H. I tell you it's impossible.

Har. Pray, pray do, sir!

Sir H. I can't, dam'me.

Har. I beseech you! [*Sir H. whistles.*] How! laughed at?

Sir H. Will you marry me, dear Ally, Ally Croker? [*Singing.*]

Har. Marry you? I had rather be married to a slave—a wretch! You! [*Walks about.*]

Sir H. A fine going thing—she has a deal of foot—treads well upon her pasterns—goes above her ground——

Har. Peace, wretch! Do you talk to me as if I were your horse?

Sir H. Horse! Why not speak of my horse? If your fine ladies had half as many good qualities, they would be much better bargains.

Har. And if their wretches of husbands liked them half so well as they do their horses, they would lead better lives.

Sir H. Mayhap so. But what signifies talking to you? The squire shall know your tricks—he'll doctor you. I'll go and talk to him.

Har. Go any where, so that you go from me.

Sir H. He'll break you in;—if you wont go in a snaffle, you must be put in a curb. He'll break you, dam'me. [*Exit,* R.

Har. A wretch!—But I was to blame to suffer his bru-

tal behavior to ruffle my temper—I could expect nothing else from him, and he is below my anger.

Enter RUSSET, R.

Rus. Are you not a sad girl? a perverse, stubborn, obstinate——

Har. My dear sir——

Rus. Lookye, Harriet, don't speak—you'll put me in a passion. Will you have him? Why don't the girl speak? —Will you have him?

Har. Dearest sir, there is nothing in the world else——

Rus. Why, there—there—lookye, there!—Zounds, you shall have him—Hussy, you shall have him; you shall marry him to-night. Did not you promise to receive him civilly? How came you to affront him?

Har. Sir, I did receive him very civilly; but his behaviour was so insolent and insupportable——

Rus. Insolent! Zounds, I'll blow his brains out! Insolent to my dear Harriet! A rogue, a villain, a scoundrel! I'll—but it's a lie—I know it's a lie—he durst not behave insolent! Will you have him? Answer me that. Will you have him? Zounds, you shall have him.

Har. If you have any love for me, sir——

Rus. Love for you! You know I love you; you know your poor fond father dotes on you to madness. I would not force you, if I did not love you! Don't I want you to be happy? But I know what you would have. You want young Oakly, a rake-helly, drunken—

Har. Release me from Sir Harry, and if I ever marry against your consent, renounce me for ever.

Rus. I will renounce you, unless you'll have Sir Harry.

Har. Consider, my dear sir, you'll make me miserable. Absolve me from this hard command, and in every thing else it will be happiness to obey you.

Rus. You'll break my heart, Harriet, you'll break my heart. Make you miserable! Don't I want to make you happy? Is not he the richest man in the county? That will make you happy. Don't all the pale-faced girls in the country long to get him? And yet you are so perverse, and wayward, and stubborn.—Zounds, you shall have him!

Har. For heaven's sake, sir——

Rus. Hold your tongue, Harriet! *I'll* hear none of your nonsense. You shall have him, I tell you, you shall have him; he shall marry you this very night. I'll go for a license and a parson immediately. Zounds, why do I stand arguing with you? A'n't I your father? Have not I a right to dispose of you? You shall have him.

Har. Sir——

Rus. I wont hear a word. You shall have him.

[*Exit*, R.

Har. (R.) Sir, hear me: but one word! He will not hear me, and is gone to prepare for this odious marriage. I will die before I consent to it.

Enter Charles, L.

Ha! What do I see? [*Screaming.*

Charles. (L.) Peace, my love! My dear life, make no noise! I have been hovering about the house this hour. I just now saw your father and Sir Harry go out, and have seized this precious opportunity to throw myself at your feet.

Har. (R.) You have given yourself, sir, a great deal of needless trouble. I did not expect or hope for the favour of such a visit.

Charles. (R.) Oh, my Harriet, upbraid me, reproach me, do anything but look and talk with that air of coldness and indifference. Let me, while their absence allows it, convey you from the brutal violence of a constrained marriage.

Har. No, I will wait the event, be it what it may. Oh, Charles, I am too much inclined—They sha'n't force me to marry Sir Harry. But your behaviour—not half an hour ago, my father reproached me with the looseness of your character. [*Weeping.*

Charles. I see my folly, and am ashamed of it; you have reclaimed me, Harriet, on my soul you have. If all women were as attentive as yourself to the morals of their lovers, a libertine would be an uncommon character. But let me persuade you to leave this place while you may. Major Oakly will receive us at his house with pleasure. I am shocked at the thoughts of what your stay here may reserve you to.

Har. No, I am determined to remain. To leave my father again, to go off openly with a man of whose libertine

character he has himself so lately been a witness, would justify his anger, and impeach my reputation.

Enter Chambermaid, R.

Cham. Oh, law, ma'am! Such a terrible accident! As sure as I am here, there's a press-gang has seized the two gemmin, and is carrying them away, thof so be as one on 'em says as how he's a knight and a baronight, and that t'other's a squire and a housekeeper.

Har. Seized by a press-gang—impossible!

Charles. Oh, now the design comes out; but I'll baulk his lordship.

Cham. Lack-a-daisy, ma'am, what can we do?—There is master, and John Ostler, and Bootcatcher, all gone a'ter 'em. There is such an uproar as never was. [*Exit*, R.

Har. If I thought this was your contrivance, I would never speak to you again.

Charles. I would sooner die than be guilty of it!—This is Lord Trinket's doing, I am sure. I knew he had some scheme in agitation, by a letter I intercepted this morning. Ha! here he comes. Nay, then, it's plain enough. Don't be frightened, my love! I'll protect you! But now I must desire you to follow my directions.

Enter Lord Trinket, L.

Lord T. Now, madam. Plague on't, he here again! Nay, then, [*Draws,*] come, sir. You're unarmed, I see. Give up the lady: give her up, I say, or I am through you in a twinkling. [*Going to make a pass at Charles.*

Charles. [*With Harriet*, R.] Keep your distance, my lord—I have arms. [*Produces a pistol.*] If you come a foot nearer, you have a brace of balls through your lordship's head.

Lord T. (L.) How? what's this? pistols!

Charles. At your lordship's service.—Sword and pistol, my lord.—Those, you know, are our weapons. If this misses, I have the fellow to it in my pocket.—Don't be frightened, madam; his lordship has removed your friends and relations, but he will take great care of you. Shall I leave you with him?

Har. Cruel Charles! you know I must go with you now.

Charles. A little way from the door, if your lordship pleases. [*Waves his hand.*

Lord T. Sir!—'Sdeath!—Madam!——

Charles. A little more round, my lord. [*Waves.*

Lord T. But, sir!—Mr. Oakly!

Charles. I have no leisure to talk with your lordship now. A little more that way, if you please.—[*Waves.*] You know where I live. If you have any commands for Miss Russet, you will hear of her, too, at my house.—Nay, keep back. my lord. [*Presents.*] Your lordship's most obedient, humble servant. [*Exit with Harriet,* L.

Lord T. [*Looks at them and pauses for a short time.*] I cut a mighty ridiculous figure here, 'pon honour. [*Exit,* L.

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

Scene I.—*Lady Freelove's House.*

Enter Lord Trinket, Lady Freelove *with a letter, and* Captain O'Cutter, R.

Lord T. (C.) Was ever anything so unfortunate! Plague on't, captain, how could you make such a strange blunder?

O'Cut. (L.) I never thought of a blunder. I was to deliver two letters; and if I gave them one a-piece, I thought it would do.

Lady F. (R.) And so, my lord, the ingenious captain gave the letter intended for me to young Oakly, and here has brought me a challenge.

Lord T. Ridiculous! Never was anything so mal apropos. Did you read the direction, captain?

O'Cut. Who—me? Devil burn me, not I—I never rade at all.

Lord T. 'Sdeath! how provoking! When I had secured the servants, and got all the people out of the way—when everything was *en train.*

Lady F. Nay, never despair, my lord. I've hit upon a method to set everything to rights again.

Lady F. How—how, my dear Lady Freelove, how?

Lady F. Suppose, then, your lordship was to go and deliver these country gentlemen from their confinement:

make them believe it was a plot of young Oakly's to carry off my niece; and so make a merit of your own services with the father.

Lord T. Admirable! I'll about it immediately.

O'Cut. Has your lordship any occasion for my sarvice in this expedition?

Lord T. Oh, no!—only release me these people, and then keep out of the way, dear captain.

O'Cut. With all my heart, 'fait. But you are all wrong:—this will not signify a brass farding. If you would let me alone, I would give him a salt eel, I warrant you. But, upon my credit, there's noting to be done without a little tilting. [*Exit*, L.

Lord T. But where shall I carry them, when I have delivered them?

Lady F. To Mr. Oakly's, by all means; you may be sure my niece is there.

Lord T. To Mr. Oakly's! Why, does your ladyship consider? 'Tis going directly in the fire of the enemy—throwing the *dèmenti* full in their teeth.

Lady F. So much the better. Face your enemies; nay, you shall outface them too. I'll certainly meet you there. It's hard, indeed, if two persons of condition can't bear themselves out against such trumpery folks as the family of the Oakly's.

Lord T. Odious, low people! But I lose time—I must after the captain; and so, till we meet at Mr. Oakly's, I kiss your ladyship's hands—you won't fail me?

Lady F. You may depend on me. [*Exit Lord Trinket*, L.] So, here is fine work! this artful little hussy has been too much for us all. Well, what's to be done? Why, when a woman of fashion gets into a scrape, nothing but a fashionable assurance can get her out of it again. I'll e'en go boldly to Mr. Oakly's, as I have promised, and if it appears practicable, I will forward Lord Trinket's match; but if I find that matters have taken another turn, his lordship must excuse me. In that case, I'll fairly drop him, seem a perfect stranger to all his intentions, and give my visit an air of congratulation to my niece, and any other husband which fortune, her wise father, or her ridiculous self, has provided for her. [*Exit*, R.

SCENE II.—*Mrs. Oakly's Dressing-room.*

MRS. OAKLY *discovered, sitting.*

Mrs. O. This is worse and worse! He never held me so much in contempt before—To go out without speaking to me, or taking the least notice! I am obliged to the Major for this. [*Rises.*] How could he take him out! and how could Mr. Oakly go with him!—

Enter TOILET, L.

Well Toilet.

Toi. My master is not come back yet, ma'am.

Mrs. O. Where is he gone?

Toi. I don't know, I can assure your ladyship.

Mrs. O. Why don't you know? You know nothing.—But I warrant you know well enough, if you would tell. You shall never persuade me but you knew of Mr. Oakly's going out to-day.

Toi. I wish I may die, ma'am, upon my honour, and I protest to your ladyship, I knew nothing in the world of the matter, no more than the child unborn. There is Mr. Paris, my master's gentleman, knows——

Mrs. O. What does he know?

Toi. That I knew nothing at all of the matter.

Mrs. O. Where is Paris? what is he doing?

Toi. He is in my master's room, ma'am.

Mrs. O. Bid him come here.

Toi. Yes, ma'am. [*Exit* L.

Mrs. O. He is certainly gone after this young flirt. His confidence and the Major's insolence provoke me beyond expression.

Re-enter TOILET *with* PARIS, L.

Where's your master?

Par. Il est sorti. He is gone out.

Mrs. O. Where is he gone?

Par. Ah, madame, *je n'en scai rien.* I know nothing of it.

Mrs. O. Nobody knows any thing. Why did not you tell me he was going out?

Par. I dress him. *Je ne m'en soucie pas du plus.* He go where he will—I have no business with it.

Mrs. O. Yes, you should have told me—that was your business—and if you don't mind your business better, you sha'nt stay here, I can tell you, sir.

Par. Voila! quelque chose d'extraordinaire!

Mrs. O. Don't stand jabbering and shrugging your shoulders, but go and inquire—go—and bring me word where he is gone!

Par. I do'nt know what I am to do.

Mrs. O. Bid John come to me.

Par. De tout mon cœur. Jean—ici—Jean! speak my lady. [*Exit*, L.

Mrs. O. Impudent fellow! His insolent gravity and indifference is insupportable.—Toilet!

Toi. Ma'am.

Mrs. O. Where's John? Why don't he come? Why do you stand with your hands before you? Why don't you fetch him?

Toi. Yes, ma'am, I'll go this minute. Oh—here, John—my lady wants you.

Enter JOHN, L.

Mrs. O. Where's your master?

John. Gone out, madam.

Mrs. O. Why did not you go with him?

John. Because he went out in the Major's chariot, madam.

Mrs. O. Where did they go to?

John. To the Major's, I suppose, madam.

Mrs. O. Suppose! Don't you know?

John. I believe so, but can't tell for certain, indeed, madam.

Mrs. O. Believe and suppose—and don't know, and can't tell! You are all fools! Go about your business. [*John going.*] Come here! [*Returns.*] Go to the Major's—no—it does not signify—go along! [*John going.*] Yes, harkye,—[*Returns.*]—go to the Major's, and see if your master is there.

John. Give your compliments, madam?

Mrs. O. My compliments, blockhead! Get along. [*John going.*] Come hither! [*Returns.*] Can't you go to the Major's, and bring me word if Mr. Oakly is there, without taking any further notice?

John. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. O. Well, why don't you go then? And make haste back—and, d'ye hear, John? [*John going, returns.*

John. Madam!

Mrs. O. Nothing at all—go along. [*John goes.*] How uneasy Mr. Oakly makes me! Harkye, John! [*John returns.*

John. Madam!

Mrs. O. Send the porter here.

John. Yes, madam. [*Exit,* L.

Toi. [*Aside.*] So, she's in a rare humour! I shall have a fine time on't.—Will your ladyship choose to dress?

Mrs. O. [*Sits at table,* C.] Pr'ythee, creature, don't tease me with your fiddle-faddle stuff—I have a thousand things to think of. Where is the porter? why has not that booby sent him? What is the meaning——

Re-enter John, L.

John. Madam, my master is this moment returned with Major Oakly, and my young master, and the lady that was here yesterday.

Mrs. O. Very well. [*Exit John,* L.] Returned—yes, truly he is returned, and in a very extraordinary manner. This is setting me at open defiance. But I'll go down, and show them I have too much spirit to endure such usage. [*Going* R.] Or, stay—I ll not go amongst his company—I'll go out.—Toilet!

Toil. Ma'am.

Mrs. O. [*Whimpering.*] Order me a boiled chicken—I'll not go down to dinner—I'll dine in my own room, and sup there I'll not see his face these three days.

Scene III.—*A large Room in Oakly's House.*

Enter Oakly, Major Oakly, Charles *and* Harriet, L.

Charles (L. C.) My dear Harriet, do not make yourself so uneasy.

Har. Alas! I have too much cause for my uneasiness. Who knows what that vile lord has done with my father?

Oak. (R.) Be comforted, madam; we shall soon hear of Mr. Russet, and all will be well, I dare say.

Har. You are too good to me, sir; I shall never forgive myself for having disturbed the peace of such a worthy family.

Maj. O. Don't mind that, madam; they'll be very good friends again. This is nothing among married people. 'Sdeath, here she is!—No—it's only Mrs. Toilet.

Re-enter TOILET, R.

Oak. Well, Toilet, what now? [*Toilet whispers him.*] Not well? Can't come down to dinner? Wants to see me above? Harkye, brother, what shall I do?

Maj. O. If you go, you are undone.

Har. Go, sir, go to Mrs. Oakly; indeed, you had better.

Maj. O. 'Sdeath, brother, don't budge a foot. This is all fractiousness and ill-humour.

Oak. No, I'll not go. Tell her I have company, and we shall be glad to see her here.

[*Exit Toi.* R. *Charles and Har. confer in back ground.*

Maj. O. That's right.

Oak. (R. C.) Suppose I go, and watch how she proceeds.

Maj. O. What dy'e mean? You would not go to her? Are you mad?

Oak. By no means go to her—I only want to know how she takes it. I'll lie perdue in my study, and observe her motions.

Maj. O. I don't like this pitiful ambuscade work—this bush-fighting. Why can't you stay here?—Ay, ay! I know how it will be. She'll come bounce in upon you with a torrent of anger and passion, or, if necessary, a whole flood of tears, and carry all before her at once.

Oak. You shall find that you are mistaken, Major. Now I am convinced I'm in the right, I'll support that right with ten times your steadiness.

Maj. O. You talk this well, brother.

Oak. I'll do it well, brother.

Maj. O. If you don't, you are undone.

Oak. Never fear, never fear. [*Exit,* R.

Maj. O. Well, Charles? [*Charles and Har. advance.*

Charles. I can't bear to see my Harriet so uneasy. I'll go immediately in quest of Mr. Russet. Perhaps I may learn at the inn where his lordship's ruffians have carried him.

Rus. [*Without*, L.] Here! Yes, yes, I know she's here, well enough. Come along, sir Harry, come along.

Har. He's here! my father; I know his voice. Where is Mr. Oakly? Oh, now, good sir, [*To the Major*,] do but pacify him, and you'll be a friend indeed.

Enter RUSSET, LORD TRINKET, *and* SIR HARRY BEAGLE, L.

Lord T. (L. C.) There, sir—I told you it was so!

Rus. Ay, ay, it is too plain. Oh, you provoking slut! Elopement after elopement!—And at last to have your father carried off by violence!—to endanger my life! Zounds! I am so angry I dare not trust myself within reach of you.

Charles. I can assure you, sir, that your daughter is entirely——

Rus. You assure me! You are the fellow that has perverted her mind—that has set my own child against me——

Charles. If you will but hear me, sir——

Rus. (C.) I won't hear a word you say. I'll have my daughter—I won't hear a word!

Maj. O. (R. C.) Nay, Mr. Russet, hear reason. If you will but have patience——

Rus. I'll have no patience: I'll have my daughter, and she shall marry Sir Harry to-night.

Lord T. That is dealing rather too much *en cavalier* with me, Mr. Russet, 'pon honour. You take no notice of my pretensions, though my rank and family——

Rus. What care I for rank and family? I don't want to make my daughter a rantipole woman of quality. I'll give her to whom I please. Take her away, Sir Harry; she shall marry you to-night.

Maj. O. Only three words, Mr. Russet——

Rus. Why don't the booby take her?

Sir H. Hold hard! Hold hard! You are all on a wrong scent. Hold hard! I say, hold hard!—Harkye, Squire Russet.

Rus. Well, what now?

Sir H. It was proposed, you know, to match me with Miss Harriet—but she can't take kindly to me. When one has made a bad bet, it is best to hedge off, you know—and so I have e'en swapped her with Lord Trinket here for his brown horse, Nabob.

Rus. Swopped her? Swopped my daughter for a horse? Zounds, sir, what d'ye mean?

Sir H. Mean? Why, I mean to be off, to be sure—it won't do—I tell you it won't do. First of all, I knocked up myself and my horses, when they took for London; and now I have been stewed aboard a tender—I have wasted three stone at least! If I could have rid my match, it would not have grieved me. And so, as I said before, I have swopped her for Nabob!

Rus. The devil take Nabob, and yourself, and Lord Trinket, and——

Lord T. Pardon! *je vous demande pardon*, Monsieur Russet, 'pon honour.

Rus. Death and the devil! I shall go distracted! My daughter plotting against me—the——

Maj. O. [*Crossing from* R. C.] Come, come, Mr. Russet, I am your man, after all. Give me but a moment's hearing, and I'll engage to make peace between you and your daughter, and throw the blame where it ought to fall most deservedly.

Sir H. Ay, ay, that's right. Put the saddle on the right horse, my buck!

Rus. Well, sir—What dy'e say?—Speak—I don't know what to do.

Maj. O. I'll speak the truth, let who will be offended by it. I have proof presumptive and positive for you, Mr. Russet. From his lordship's behaviour at Lady Freelove's, when my nephew rescued her, we may fairly conclude that he would stick at no measures to carry his point—there's proof presumptive. But, sir, we can give you proof positive, too—proof under his lordship's own hand, that he was likewise the contriver of the gross affront that has just been offered you.

Rus. Hey, how?

Lord T. (L.) Every syllable romance, 'pon honour!

Maj. O. Gospel, every word on't.

Charles. [*Crosses from* R.] This letter will convince you, sir! In consequence of what happened at Lady Freelove's, his lordship thought fit to send me a challenge; but the messenger blundered, and gave me this letter instead of it. [*Giving the letter.*] I have the case which enclosed it in my pocket.

Lord T. Forgery from beginning to end, 'pon honour!

Maj. O. Truth, upon my honour. But read, read, Mr. Russet; read, and be convinced.

Rus. Let me see—let me see—[*Reads.*]—Um—um—um—um—so, so—um—um—um—damnation!—*Wish me success—obedient slave*—Trinket—Fire and fury! How dare you do this?

Lord T. When you are cool, Mr. Russet, I will explain this matter to you.

Rus. Cool! 'Sdeath! I'll never be cool again,—I'll be revenged. So my Harriet, my dear girl, is innocent at last! [*Charles goes and conducts her from* R.] Say so, my Harriet; tell me you are innocent. [*Embraces, &c.*

Har. I am indeed, sir, and happy beyond expression at your being convinced of it.

[*Lord Trinket and Sir H. confer in back ground.*

Rus. (c.) I am glad on't—I am glad on't—I believe you, Harriet!—You was always a good girl.

Maj. O. So she is, an excellent girl!—Worth a regiment of such lords and baronets.—Come, sir, finish every thing handsomely at once. Come, Charles will have a handsome fortune.

Rus. Marry!—she durst not do it. [*Charles goes* R.

Maj. O. Consider, sir, they have long been fond of each other—old acquaintance—faithful lovers—turtles—and may be very happy.

Rus. Well, well—since things are so—I love my girl. Harkye, young Oakly: if you don't make her a good husband, you'll break my heart, you rogue.

Maj. O. I'll cut his throat, if he don't.

Charles. Do not doubt it, sir! my Harriet has reformed me altogether.

Rus. Has she? Why, then, [*Leads her* R. *to Charles.*] there, heaven bless you both—there—now there's an end on't.

Sir H. [*Comes forward,* L.] So, my lord, you and I are both distanced. A hollow thing, dam'me!

Lord T. N'importe.

Sir H. Now this stake is drawn, my lord may be for hedging off, mayhap. Ecod! I'll go to Jack Speed's, secure Nabob, and be out of town in an hour.

[*Aside and exit,* L.

Enter LADY FREELOVE, L.

Lady F. My dear Miss Russet, you'll excuse——

Charles. Mrs. Oakly, at your ladyship's service.

Lady F. Married?

Har. Not yet, madam; but my father has been so good as to give his consent.

Lady F. I protest I am prodigiously glad of it. My dear, I give you joy—and you, Mr. Oakly.—I wish you joy, Mr. Russet, and all the good company—for I think the most of them are parties concerned.

[*Charles, Harriet, and Russet retire back.*

Maj. O. (R.) How easy, impudent and familiar! [*Aside.*

Lady F. (L. C.) Lord Trinket here, too! I vow I did not see your lordship before.

Lord T. Your ladyship's most obedient slave. [*Bowing.*

Lady F. You seem grave, my lord! Come, come, I know there has been some difference between you and Mr. Oakly—You must give me leave to be a mediator in this affair.

Lord T. Here has been a small fracas, to be sure, madam! We are all blown, 'pon honour.

Lady F. Blown! what do you mean, my lord?

Lord T. Nay, your ladyship knows that I never mind these things, and I know that they never discompose your ladyship.—But things have happened a little *en travers*—[*Russet advances.*] The little billet I sent your ladyship has fallen into the hands of that gentleman—[*Pointing to Charles,*]—and so there has been a little *brouillerie* about it—that's all.

Lady F. You talk to me, my lord, in a very extraordinary style—If you have been guilty of any misbehaviour, I am sorry for it; but your ill conduct can fasten no imputation on me. Miss Russet will justify me sufficiently.

Maj. O. Had not your ladyship better appeal to my friend Charles here?—The letter, Charles! Out with it, this instant!

Charles. [*Leading Harriet forward,* R. C.] Yes, I have the credentials of her ladyship's integrity in my pocket. Mr. Russet, the letter you read a while ago was inclosed in this cover, which also I now think it my duty to put into your hands.

Rus. (c.) [*Reading.*] *To the Right Honourable Lady Freelove*—'Sdeath!—and now I recollect, the letter itself was pierced with scraps of French, and madam, and your ladyship. Fire and fury! madam, how came you to use me me so? I am obliged to you, then, for the insult that has been offered me?

Lady F. What is all this? Your obligations to me, Mr. Russet, are of such a nature, that——

Rus. Fine obligations! I dare say, I am partly obliged to you, too, for the attempt on my daughter, by that thing of a lord yonder, at your house. Zounds, madam! these are injuries never to be forgotten—They are the grossest affronts to me and my family—All the world shall know them. Zounds! I'll——

Lady F. Mercy on me! how boisterous are these country gentlemen! Why, really, Mr. Russet, you rave like a man in Bedlam.—I am afraid you'll beat me; and then you swear most abominably. How can you be so vulgar? I see the meaning of this low malice: but the reputations of women of quality are not so easily impeached. My rank places me above the scandal of little people, and I shall meet such petty insolence with the greatest ease and tranquillity. But you and your simple girl will be the sufferers. I had some thoughts of introducing her into the first company; but now, madam, I shall neither receive nor return your visits, and will entirely withdraw my protection from the ordinary part of the family. [*Exit*, L.

Rus. Zounds, what impudence! that's worse than all the rest.

Lord T. Fine presence of mind, faith! The true French nonchalance. But, good folks, why such a deal of rout and *tapage* about nothing at all? If Mademoiselle Harriet had rather be Mrs. Oakly than Lady Trinket—Why, I wish her joy, that's all. Mr. Russet, I wish you joy of your son-in-law. Mr. Oakly, I wish you joy of the lady; and you, madam, [*To Harriet,*] of the gentleman. And, in short, I wish you all joy of one another, 'pon honour. [*Exit*, L.

Rus. There's a fine fellow of a lord, now! The devil's in your London folks of the first fashion, as you call them. They will rob you of your estate, carry off your daughter, or insult your wife—and all as if they were doing you a favour—'pon honour!

Maj. O. Hey! what now! [*Bell rings violently.*
[*Russet, Charles, and Harriet retire in back ground.*

Enter OAKLY, R.

Oak. (R.) D'ye hear, major, d'ye hear?

Maj. O. (C.) Zounds! what a clatter;—She'll pull down all the bells in the house.

Oak. (R. C.) My observations since I left you, have confirmed my resolution. I see plainly that her good humour and her ill humour, her smiles, her tears, and her fits, are all calculated to play upon me.

Maj. O. Did not I always tell you so? It's the way with them all—they will be rough and smooth, and hot and cold, and all in a breath. Anything to get the better of us.

Oak. She is in all moods at present, I promise you.—There has she been in her chamber, fuming and fretting, and dispatching a messenger to me every two minutes—servant after servant—now she insists on my coming to her—now again she writes a note to entreat—Then Toilet is sent to let me know she is ill, absolutely dying—then the very next minute, she'll never see my face again—she'll go out of the house directly. [*Bell rings.*] Again! now the storm rises!

Maj. O. It will soon drive this way, then.—Now, brother, prove yourself a man. You have gone too far to retreat.

Oak. Retreat! Retreat! No, no! I'll preserve the advantage I have gained, I am determined.

Maj. O. Ay, ay! keep your ground! Fear nothing—up with your noble heart! Good discipline makes good soldiers; stick close to my advice, and you may stand buff to a tigress.

Oak. Here she is, by heavens! now, brother!

Maj. O. And now, brother? (L. C.) Now or never!

Re-enter MRS. OAKLY, R.

Mrs. O. (R.) I think, Mr. Oakly, you might have had humanity enough to have come to see how I did. You have taken your leave, I suppose, of all tenderness and affection—but I'll be calm—I'll not throw myself into a passion—you want to drive me out of your house—I see what

you aim at, and will be aforehand with you.—Let me keep my temper! I'll send for a chair, and leave the house this instant.

Oak. (c.) True, my love: I knew you would not think of dining in your chamber alone, when I had company below. You shall sit at the head of the table, as you ought, to be sure, as you say, and make my friends welcome.

Mrs. O. Excellent raillery! Lookye, Mr. Oakly, I see the meaning of all this affected coolness and indifference

Oak. My dear, consider where you are.—

Mrs. O. You would be glad, I find, to get me out of your house, and have all your flirts about you.

Oak. Before all this company! Fie!

Mrs. O. But I'll disappoint you, for I shall remain in it, to support my due authority.—[*Goes fiercely to Major O.*]—(L. c.) As for you, Major Oakly—

Maj. O. Hey-day! what have I done?

Mrs. O. (c.) I think you might find better employment, than to create divisions between married people—and you, sir!

Oak. Nay, but my dear!—

Mrs. O. Might have more sense, as well as tenderness, than to give ear to such idle stuff.

Oak. Lord, Lord!

Mrs. O. You and your wise counsellor there, I suppose, think to carry all your points with me.

Oak. Was ever any thing——

Mrs. O. But it won't do, sir. You shall find that I will have my own way, and that I will govern my own family.

Oak. You had better learn to goven yourself, by half. Your passion makes you ridiculous. Did ever any body see so much fury and violence; affronting your best friends, breaking my peace, and disconcerting your own temper. And all for what? For nothing! 'Sdeath, madam! at these years, you ought to know better.

Mrs. O. At these years!—Very fine!—Am I to be talked to in this manner?

Oak. Talked to!—Why not? You have talked to me long enough—almost talked me to death—and I have taken it all, in hopes of making you quiet, bnt all in vain. Patience, I find, is all thrown away upon you; and hence-

forward, come what may, I am resolved to be master of my own house.

Mrs. O. So, so! Master, indeed! Yes, sir; and you'll take care to have mistresses enough too, I warrant you.

Oak. Perhaps I may; but they shall be quiet ones, I can assure you.

Mrs. O. Indeed!—And do you think I am such a tame fool, as to sit quietly and bear all this? You shall know, sir, that I will resent this behaviour—you shall find that I have a spirit—

Oak. Of the devil.

Mrs. O. Intolerable!—you shall find, then, that I will exert that spirit. I am sure I have need of it. As soon as the house is once cleared again, I'll shut my doors against all company.—You shan't see a single soul for this month.

Oak. 'Sdeath, madam, but I will!—I'll keep open house for a year.—I'll send cards to the whole town—Mr. Oakly's rout!—All the world will come—and I'll go among the world too. I'll be mewed up no longer.

Mrs. O. Provoking insolence! This is not to be endured. Lookye, Mr. Oakly——

Oak. And lookye, Mrs. Oakly, I will have my own way.

Mrs. O. Nay, then, let me tell you, sir——

Oak. And let me tell you, madam, I will not be crossed—I won't be made a fool.

Mrs. O. Why, you won't let me speak.

Oak. Because you don't speak as you ought. Madam, madam! you shan't look, nor walk, nor talk, nor think, but as I please!

Mrs. O. Was there ever such a monster! I can bear this no longer. [*Bursts into tears.*] Oh, you vile man! I can see through your design—you cruel, barbarous, inhuman—such usage to your poor wife!—you'll be the death of her.

Oak. She shan't be the death of me, I am determined.

Mrs. O. That it should ever come to this!—To be contradicted—[*Sobbing.*]—insulted—abused—hated—'tis too much—my heart will burst with—oh—oh!—

[*Runs to chair*, &c., *and falls into a fit. Harriet, Charles, &c., run to her assistance, but Oakly and the Major meet them and drive them back.*

Oak. [*Interposing*] Let her alone.

Har. Sir, Mrs. Oakly——

Charles. For heaven's sake, sir, she will be——

Oak. Let her alone—let her alone.

Har. Pray, my dear sir, let us assist her. She may——

Oak. I don't care.—Let her alone, I say.

Mrs. O. [*Rising.*] Oh, you monster!—you villain!—you base man!—Would you let me die for want of help?—would you—

Oak. Bless me! madam, your fit is very violent—take care of yourself.

Mrs. O. Despised, ridiculed—but I'll be revenged—you shall see, sir——

Oak. Tol-de-rol lol-de-rol lol-de-rol lol. [*Singing.*

Mrs. O. What, am I made a jest of? Exposed to all the world? If there's law or justice——

Oak. Tol-de-rol lol-de-rol lol-de-rol lol. [*Singing.*

Mrs. O. I shall burst with anger. Have a care, sir; you may repent this. Scorned and made ridiculous! No power on earth shall hinder my revenge! [*Going.*

Har. [*Interposing.*] Stay, madam.

Mrs. O. Let me go—I cannot bear this place!

Har. Let me beseech you, madam.

Maj. O. Courage, brother—you have done wonders! [*Apart.*

Oak. I think she'll have no more fits. [*Apart.*

Har. Stay, madam—pray stay one moment. I have been a painful witness of your uneasiness, and in great part the innocent occasion of it. Give me leave, then——

Mrs. O. I did not expect, indeed, to have found you here again. But however——

Har. (R.) I see the agitation of your mind, and it makes me miserable. Suffer me to tell the real truth—I can explain every thing to your satisfaction.

Mrs. O. (R.) May be so—I cannot argue with you.

Charles. (R. C.) Pray, madam, hear her, for my sake, for your own, dear madam!

Mrs. O. Well, well—proceed.

Har. I understand, madam, that your first alarm was occasioned oy a letter from my father to your nephew.

Rus. [*Goes to her.*] I was in a swinging passion, to be sure, madam! The letter was not over civil, I believe—I

did not know but the young rogue had ruined my girl. But it's all over now, and so——

Mrs. O. You was here yesterday, sir?

Rus. Yes, I came after Harriet. I thought I should find my young madam with my young sir, here.

Mrs. O. With Charles, did you say, sir?

Rus. Ay, with Charles, madam. The young rogue has been fond of her for a long time, and she of him, it seems.

Mrs. O. (c.) I fear I have been to blame. [*Aside.*

Rus. I ask pardon, madam, for the disturbance I made in your house.

Har. And the abrupt manner in which I came into it demands a thousand apologies. But the occasion must be my excuse.

Mrs. O. [*Aside.*] How have I been mistaken!—But did I not overhear you and Mr. Oakly——[*To Harriet.*

Har. Dear madam, you had but a partial hearing of our conversation. It related entirely to this gentleman.

Charles. To put it beyond doubt, madam, Mr. Russet and my guardian have consented to our marriage; and we are in hopes that you will not withhold your approbation.

Mrs. O. I have no further doubt: I see you are innocent, and it was cruel to suspect you. You have taken a load of anguish off my mind; and yet your kind interposition comes too late; Mr. Oakly's love for me is entirely destroyed. [*Weeping.*

Oak. [*With Major,* L. C.] I must go to her! [*Apart.*

Maj. O. Not yet, not yet! [*Detaining him apart.*]

Har. Do not disturb yourself with such apprehensions; I am sure Mr. Oakly loves you most affectionately.

Oak. [*Breaks away.*] I can hold no longer. [*Going to her.*] My affection for you, madam, is as warm as ever. My constrained behaviour has cut me to the soul; for it was all constrained, and it was with the utmost difficulty that I was able to support it.

Mrs. O. Oh, Mr. Oakly, how have I exposed myself! What low arts has my jealousy induced me to practice! I see my folly, and fear that you can never forgive me.

Oak. Forgive you! This change transports me! Brother—Mr. Russet—Charles—Harriet—give me joy. I am the happiest man in the world!

Maj. O. Joy, much joy to you both! though, by-the-

bye, you are not a little obliged to me for it. Did not I tell you I would cure all the disorders in your family? I beg pardon, sister, for taking the liberty to prescribe for you. My medicines have been somewhat rough, I believe, but they have had an admirable effect, and so don't be angry with your physician.

Mrs. O. I am indeed obliged to you, and I feel——

Oak. Nay, my dear, no more of this. All that's past must be utterly forgotten.

Mrs. O. I have not merited this kindness, but it shall hereafter be my study to deserve it. Away with all idle jealousies! And since my suspicions have hitherto been groundless, I am resolved for the future never to suspect at all.

DISPOSITION OF THE CHARACTERS AT THE FALL OF THE CURTAIN.

Russet, Charles, Harriet, Mrs. Oakly, Oakly, Maj. Oakly.

R.] L.

THE END.

No. XXXI.

MODERN STANDARD DRAMA.

EDITED BY EPES SARGENT,

AUTHOR OF "VELASCO, A TRAGEDY," &c.

THE RIVALS.

A Comedy

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN.

WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS, CAST OF CHARACTERS, COSTUMES, RELATIVE POSITIONS, &c.

NEW YORK:

WM. TAYLOR & CO., No. 2 ASTOR HOUSE,

AND JARVIS BUILDINGS, NORTH ST., BALTIMORE.

BOSTON: REDDING AND CO.—PHILADELPHIA: ZIEBER AND CO., AND R. G. SHERMAN.—PITTSBURGH: J. W. COOK.—CHARLESTON: AMOS HEAD.—CINCINNATI: ROBINSON AND JONES.—MOBILE: M. BOULLEMET.—LOUISVILLE: J. H. PENTON.—NEW ORLEANS: J. C. MORGAN, AND JOHN SLY.

PRICE 12 1-2 CENTS

EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION.

"THERE will be a *comedy* of mine in rehearsal at Covent Garden within a few days. I have done it at Mr. Harris's (the manager's) own request; it is now complete in his hands, and preparing for the stage. He, and some of his friends also who have heard it, assure me in the most flattering terms that there is not a doubt of its success. It will be very well played, and Harris tells me that the least shilling I shall get (if it succeeds) will be six hundred pounds. I shall make no secret of it towards the time of representation, that it may not lose any support my friends can give it. I had not written a line of it two months ago, except a scene or two, which I believe you have seen in an odd act of a little farce."

Thus wrote Sheridan to his wife's father, Mr. Linley, the 17th November, 1774; and on the 17th January, 1775, the comedy of The Rivals, written in the twenty-third year of the author's age, was brought out at Covent Garden. Owing to the bad acting of Mr. Lee, in the part of *Sir Lucius O'Trigger*, the comedy failed on its first representation. What probably contributed still more to its bad reception, was its uncommon length—a fault to which Sheridan himself alludes in the following terms:

"The season was advanced when I first put the play into Mr. Harris's hands;—it was at that time at least double the length of any acting comedy. I profited by his judgment and experience in the curtailing of it—till, I believe, his feeling for the vanity of a young author got the better of his desire for correctness, and he left many excrescences remaining, because he had assisted in pruning so many more. Hence, though I was not uninformed that the acts were still too long, I flattered myself that, after the first trial, I might with safer judgment proceed to remove what was dissatisfactory. Many other errors there were, which might in part have arisen from my being by no means conversant with plays in general, either in reading or at the theatre."

Another actor, Mr. Clinch, having been substituted in place of the incompetent representative of Sir Lucius, and the redundancies of the comedy having been retrenched, it was acted with consummate success, and, as Moore remarks, "rose at once into that high region of public favour, where it has continued to float so buoyantly and gracefully ever since. From the liveliness of its plot, the variety and whimsicality of its characters, and the exquisite humour of its dialogue, it is one of the most amusing plays in the whole range of the drama; and,

even without the aid of its more splendid successor, The School for Scandal, would have placed Sheridan in the first rank of comic writers."

In Bath, where the scene of the comedy is laid, its success was, as might be expected, very great. In a letter from the author's sister-in-law, dated March 9th, 1775, we find the following account of its first representation at that celebrated watering-place; "There was a very full house; the play was performed inimitably well; nor did I hear, for the honour of our Bath actors, one single prompt the whole night; but I suppose the poor creatures never acted with such shouts of applause in their lives, so that they were incited by that to do their best. They lost many of *Malaprop's* good sayings by the applause: in short, I never saw or heard anything like it: before the actors spoke, they began their clapping."

No more diverting comedy than "The Rivals" has been produced since its appearance; but in this play, as in "The School for Scandal," some of the characters seem to us more like professed wits, disguised and lying in wait for a brilliant antithesis or pointed retort, than genuine flesh-and-blood personages moving in the station of life to which the author would have us believe they belong. Nothing can be more ludicrous and laughable than some of *Mrs. Malaprop's* misapplications of words; but the species of humour shown in her idiosyncrasies is hardly of a higher rank than that which the newspapers, in Della Cruscan times, used to indulge in, under the name of *cross-readings*. It would be an easy matter for some of our comic writers to reproduce *Mrs. Malaprop*, who, by the way, is but a reproduction of Fielding's *Mrs. Slipslop;* but what dramatist would be bold enough to attempt to bring *Falstaff* again upon the stage?

In the character of *Acres*, we have another instance of the attainment of humorous effects rather by epigrammatic invention than by genuine touches of nature. His system of "referential or allegorical swearing," was shrewdly pronounced by Sheridan's own brother-in-law, Tickell, as "very good, but above the speaker's capacity;" and Hazlitt points out the violation of probability in the presence of mind which the bumpkin exhibits in persisting in his allegorical oaths even while trembling all over with cowardice in the duel scene, where his pusillanimity finds vent in such exclamations as, "Odds triggers and flints!" The last-named critic remarks in continuation, that "in proportion as the author has overdone the part, it calls for a greater effort of animal spirits and a peculiar aptitude of genius in the actor to go through with it, to humour the extravagance, and to seem to take a real and cordial delight in caricaturing himself. Dodd was the only actor we remember, who realised this ideal combination of volatility and phlegm, of slowness of understanding with levity of purpose, of

vacancy of thought and vivacity of gesture. In general, this character is made little of on the stage; and when left to shift for itself, seems as vapid as it is forced."

When, in contemplation of the duel, *Acres* says, "think what it would be to disgrace my ancestors," the reply of his servant is, "under favour, the surest way of not disgracing them is to keep as long as you can out of their company"—a repartee, which might have come appropriately from the lips of the bitter *Faulkland*, or the choleric *Sir Anthony*, but which is hardly in keeping with the character and position of such a clodhopper as *David*. But the joke fell in the writer's way; and regarding it as too brilliant to lose, he gave it a false setting. Sheridan must have had *Launce* in his mind, when sketching this part of *David*. The latter's description of the consequences that would ensue in the event of his master's falling in the duel—"Phillis howling" and the old horse "cursing the hour he was born"—is a transposition of the Shakspearian clown's idea of the "cat's wringing her hands" on the occasion of his own parting from his family.

Leigh Hunt remarks that the character of *Faulkland* was thought to be suggested to the author by some tempers of his own during courtship. If this be so, Sheridan must have been the most unreasonable and provoking of lovers. The part of *Faulkland* is rather a thankless and disagreeable one, even when embodied in the person of a favorite and accomplished actor. "The character of *Sir Anthony Absolute*," says Moore, "is, perhaps, the best sustained and most natural of any, and the scenes between him and *Captain Absolute* are richly, genuinely dramatic. His surprise at the apathy with which his son receives the glowing picture which he draws of the charms of his destined bride, and the effect of the question, 'And which is to be mine, sir—the niece, or the aunt?' are in the truest style of humour." Hazlitt says, with justice, that the whole tone of this comedy, as well as the local scenery, reminds the reader of Humphrey Clinker. "*Sir Anthony* is an evident copy after Smollett's kind-hearted, high-spirited Matthew Bramble, as *Mrs. Malaprop* is after the redoubted linguist, Mrs. Tabitha Bramble. *Fag*, *Lucy*, and *Sir Lucius O'Trigger*, though subordinate agents in the plot of The Rivals, are not the less amusing on that account. *Fag* wears his master's wit, as he does his lace, at second-hand; *Lucy* is an edifying specimen of simplicity in a chamber maid; and *Sir Lucius* is an honest fortune-hunting Hibernian, who means well to himself, and no harm to anybody else. These are also traditional characters, common to the stage, but they are drawn with all the life and spirit of originals. There is scarcely a more delightful play than the Rivals when it is well acted, or one that goes off more indifferently when it is not."

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

	Original Cast at Covent Garden.	*Park*, 1833.	*Boston*, 1846.
Sir Ant'ny Absolute,	Mr. Shuter.	Mr. Clarke.	Mr. H. Placide.
Captain Absolute...	" Woodward.	" Mason.	" Gallagher.
Faulkland	" Lewis.	" Harrison.	" Bland.
Acres	" Quick.	" Placide.	" T. Placide.
Sir Lucius O'Trigger	" Lee.	" Fisher.	" Brougham.
Fag	" Lee Lewes.	" Rae.	" Johnson.
David	" Dunstal.	" Blakely.	" Whiting.
Boy		Master Kneass.	Master Johnson.
Thomas (Coachman)	" Fearon	" Collet.	Mr. Benson.
Servant		" Hayden.	" Adams.
Mrs. Malaprop	Mrs. Green.	Mrs. Wheatley.	Mrs. Gilbert.
Lydia Languish	Miss Barsanti.	" Sharpe.	" Bland.
Julia	Mrs. Bulkley.	" Harrison.	" H. Cramer.
Lucy	Mrs. Lessingham.	" Durie.	" Mueller.
Maid			

SCENE,—BATH.—Time of Action, Five Hours.
Time of Representation, Two Hours and Fifty-Five Minutes.

COSTUMES.

SIR ANTHONY ABSOLUTE.—Light brown cloth suit, lined with crimson silk, and gold buttons. A brown great coat, black silk plush cuffs and collar, and gold vellum button holes; cocked hat, gold loop and cockade; white silk stockings, square-toed shoes, and buckles.

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.—Scarlet regimental full dress coat, white breeches, silk stockings and cocked hat.

SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER.—Fashionable blue dress coat, lined with white silk, and gilt buttons; white waistcoat, black silk breeches and stockings, and cocked hat.

FAULKLAND.—Full dress black coat, white waistcoat, black breeches, and black stockings.

ACRES.—First dress—Brown riding frock, buff waistcoat, and white cord breeches. Second dress—An orange cloth coat, white waistcoat, with a scarlet satin under, buff stocking pantaloons, trimmed with light blue braid, white silk stockings, and cocked hat.

FAG.—Dark livery frock, buff waistcoat and breeches, glazed hat with cockade, silver hand, and top boots.

DAVID.—Sky blue coat, red waistcoat, leather breeches, striped stockings, shoes and buckles, wig, and white neckcloth.

COACHMAN.—Blue livery.

JULIA.—First dress—White lono, and ditto scarf, trimmed with lace. Second dress—white satin.

LYDIA LANGUISH.—White crape frock, festooned up at the bottom, with pink silk cord and tassels.

MRS. MALAPROP.—Crimson satin dress, trimmed with white lace and satin ribbon.

LUCY.—Light coloured gown and apron, trimmed with ribbon.

EXITS AND ENTRANCES.

R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; R. D. *Right Door*; L. D. *Left Door*; S. E. *Second Entrance*; U. E. *Upper Entrance*; M. D. *Middle Door*.

RELATIVE POSITIONS.

R., means *Right*; L., *Left*; C., *Centre*; R. C., *Right of Centre*; L. C., *Left of Centre*.

THE RIVALS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Street in Bath.*

Enter COACHMAN *and* FAG, *meeting.*

Fag. What! Thomas!—Sure, 'tis he!—What, Thomas! Thomas!

Coach. Hey? odds life!—Mr. Fag! give us your hand, my old fellow-servant.

Fag. Excuse my glove, Thomas; I'm devilish glad to see you, my lad! why, my prince of charioteers, you look as hearty—but who the deuce thought of seeing you in Bath?

Coach. Sure, master, madam Julia, Harry, Mrs. Kate, and the postillion, be all come.

Fag. Indeed!

Coach. Ay: master thought another fit of the gout was coming to make him a visit, so he'd a mind to gi't the slip—an whip! we were all off at an hour's warning.

Fag. Ay, ay: hasty in every thing, or it would not be Sir Anthony Absolute.

Coach. But tell us, Mr. Fag, how does young master? Odds! Sir Anthony will stare to see the captain here!

Fag. I do not serve Captain Absolute now.

Coach. Why, sure!

Fag. At present, I am employed by Ensign Beverley.

Coach. I doubt, Mr. Fag, you ha'n't changed for the better.

Fag. I have not changed, Thomas.

Coach. No! why, didn't you say you had left young master?

Fag. No. Well, honest Thomas, I must puzzle you no further: briefly, then, Captain Absolute and Ensign Beverley are one and the same person.

Coach. The devil they are! Do tell us, Mr. Fag, the meaning on't.

Fag. Why, then, the cause of all this is love—love, Thomas, who has been a masquerader ever since the days of Jupiter.

Coach. But, pray, why does your master pass only for Ensign? Now, if he had shammed General, indeed—

Fag. Ah, Thomas! there lays the mystery of the matter.—Hark ye, Thomas: my master is in love with a lady of a very singular taste—a lady, who likes him better as a half-pay Ensign, than if she knew he was son and heir to Sir Anthony Absolute, a baronet of three thousand a-year.

Coach. That is an odd taste, indeed! But has she got the stuff, Mr. Fag? is she rich, eh?

Fag. Rich! why, I believe she owns half the stocks! Zounds, Thomas, she could pay the national debt as easily as I could my washerwoman! She has a lap-dog that eats out of gold, she feeds her parrot with small pearls, and all her thread-papers are made of bank-notes!

Coach. Bravo, faith! Odd! I warrant she has a set of thousands, at least! But does she draw kindly with the captain?

Fag. As fond as pigeons.

Coach. May one hear her name?

Fag. Miss Lydia Languish;—but there is an old tough aunt in the way—though, by-the-bye, she has never seen my master, for he got acquainted with miss while on a visit to Gloucestershire.

Coach. Well, I wish they were once harnessed together in matrimony. But pray, Mr. Fag, what kind of a place is this Bath? I ha' heard a great deal of it. Here's a mort o' merry-making, eh?

Fag. Pretty well, Thomas, pretty well; 'tis a good lounge—but damn the place, I'm tired of it: their regular hours stupefy me—not a fiddle or a card after eleven! However, Mr. Faulkland's gentleman and I keep it up a little in private parties. I'll introduce you there, Thomas: you'll like him much. But, Thomas, you must polish a little—indeed, you must. Here, now, this wig: what the

devil do you do with a wig, Thomas? none of the London whips, of any degree of ton, wear wigs now.

Coach. More's the pity, more's the pity, I say, Mr. Fag. Odds life! when I heard how the lawyers and doctors had took to their own hair, I thought how 'twould go next. Odd rabbit it! when the fashion had got foot on the bar, I guessed 'twould mount to the box. But 'tis all out of character, believe me, Mr. Fag; and look ye, I'll never give up mine—the lawyers and doctors may do as they will.

Fag. Well, Thomas, we'll not quarrel about that. But hold, mark—mark, Thomas.

Coach. Zooks, 'tis the captain! Is that the lady with him?

Fag. No, no, that is madam Lucy, my master's mistress's maid: they lodge at that house. But I must after him, to tell him the news.

Coach. Odd, he's giving her money!—Well, Mr. Fag—

Fag. Good bye, Thomas; I have an appointment in Gyde's porch this evening, at eight: meet me there, and we'll make a little party. [*Exeunt Coach.* R., *Fag,* L.

SCENE II.—*A Dressing-Room in Mrs. Malaprop's Lodgings.* —LYDIA LANGUISH *sitting on a Sofa, with a Book in her hand;* LUCY *as just returned from a Message, on her* R.

Lucy. Indeed, ma'am, I traversed half the town in search of it: I don't believe there's a circulating library in Bath I ha'n't been at.

Lyd. And could you not get "The Reward of Constancy?"

Lucy. No, indeed, ma'am.

Lyd. Nor "The Fatal Connexion?"

Lucy. No, indeed, ma'am.

Lyd. Nor "The Mistakes of the Heart?"

Lucy. Ma'am, as ill-luck would have it, Mr. Bull said, Miss Sukey Saunter had just fetched it away.

Lyd. Heigho! Did you inquire for "The Delicate Distress?"

Lucy. Or, "The Memoirs of Lady Woodford?" Yes, indeed, ma'am, I asked every where for it; and I might have brought it from Mr. Frederick's, but Lady Slattern Lounger, who had just sent it home, had so soiled and dog's-eared it, it wa'n't fit for a Christian to read.

Lyd. Heigho! Yes, always know when Lady Slattern has been before me: she has a most observing thumb, and, I believe, cherishes her nails for the convenience of making marginal notes. Well, child, what have you brought me?

Lucy. Oh, here, ma'am! [*Takes books from under her cloak and from her pockets.*] This is "The Man of Feeling," and this, "Peregrine Pickle"—here are "The Tears of Sensibility," and "Humphrey Clinker."

Lyd. Hold! here's some one coming—quick, see who it is. [*Exit Lucy,* L.] Surely I heard my cousin Julia's voice!

Re-enter Lucy, L.

Lucy. Lud, ma'am, here is Miss Melville!

Lyd. Is it possible! [*Exit Lucy,* L.

Enter Julia, L.

Lyd. My dearest Julia, how delighted I am! [*They embrace.*] How unexpected was this happiness!

Jul. True, Lydia, and our pleasure is the greater. But what has been the matter? you were denied to me at first.

Lyd. Ah, Julia, I have a thousand things to tell you! But first inform me what has conjured you to Bath? Is Sir Anthony here?

Jul. He is: we are arrived within this hour, and I suppose he will be here to wait on Mrs. Malaprop as soon as he is dressed.

Lyd. Then before we are interrupted, let me impart to you some of my distress: I know your gentle nature will sympathize with me, though your prudence may condemn me. My letters have informed you of my whole connexion with Beverley; but I have lost him, my Julia—my aunt has discovered our intercourse, by a note she intercepted, and has confined me ever since. Yet would you believe it? she has fallen absolutely in love with a tall Irish baronet she met one night, since we have been here, at Lady Mac Shuffle's rout.

Jul. You jest, Lydia.

Lyd. No, upon my word. She really carries on a kind of correspondence with him, under a feigned name though, till she chooses to be known to him; but it is a Delia, or a Celia, I assure you.

Jul. Then surely she is now more indulgent to her niece?

Lyd. Quite the contrary: since she has discovered her own frailty, she has become ten times more suspicious of mine.—Then I must inform you of another plague: that odious Acres is to be in Bath to-day; so that, I protest, I shall be teased out of all spirits.

Jul. Come, come, Lydia, hope for the best:—Sir Anthony shall use his interest with Mrs. Malaprop.

Lyd. But you have not heard the worst:—Unfortunately I had quarrelled with my poor Beverley, just before my aunt made the discovery, and I have not seen him since to make it up.

Jul. What was his offence?

Lyd. Nothing at all; but I don't know how it was, as often as we had been together, we had never had a quarrel; and, somehow, I was afraid he would never give me an opportunity; so, last Thursday I wrote a letter to myself, to inform myself that Beverley was, at that time, paying his addresses to another woman. I signed it "Your unknown friend," showed it to Beverley, charged him with his falsehood, put myself in a violent passion, and vowed I'd never see him more.

Jul. And you let him depart so, and have not seen him since?

Lyd. 'Twas the next day my aunt found the matter out; I intended only to have teazed him three days and a half, and now I have lost him forever.

Jul. If he is as deserving and sincere as you have represented him to me, he will never give you up so.—Yet consider, Lydia, you tell me he is but an Ensign—and you have thirty thousand pounds!

Lyd. But, you know, I lose most of my fortune if I marry without my aunt's consent, till of age; and that is what I have determined to do ever since I knew the penalty; nor could I love the man who would wish to wait a day for the alternative.

Jul. Nay, this is caprice!

Lyd. What, does Julia tax me with caprice? I thought her lover Faulkland had inured her to it.

Jul. I do not love even his faults.

Lyd. But you have sent to him, I suppose?

Jul. Not yet, upon my word! nor has he the least idea

of my being in Bath:—Sir Anthony's resolution was so sudden, I could not inform him of it.

Lyd. Well, Julia, you are your own mistress, though under the protection of Sir Anthony; yet have you, for this long year, been a slave to the caprice, the whim, the jealousy of this ungrateful Faulkland, who will ever delay assuming the right of a husband, while you suffer him to be equally imperious as a lover.

Jul. Nay, you are wrong entirely:—we were contracted before my father's death; that, and some consequent embarrassments, have delayed what I know to be my Faulkland's most ardent wish. He is too generous to trifle on such a point; and, for his character, you wrong him there too. No, Lydia, he is too proud, too noble, to be jealous: if he is captious, 'tis without dissembling; if fretful, without rudeness. Unused to the fopperies of love, he is negligent of the little duties expected from a lover; but, being unhackneyed in the passion, his affection is ardent and sincere; and as it engrosses his whole soul, he expects every look and emotion of his mistress to move in unison with his. Yet, though his pride calls for this full return, his humility makes him undervalue those qualities in him, which would entitle him to it; and not feeling why he should be loved to the degree he wishes, he still suspects that he is not loved enough. This, I must own, has cost me many unhappy hours; but I have learned to think myself his debtor for those imperfections which arise from the ardour of his attachment.

Lyd. Well, I cannot blame you for defending him;—but, tell me candidly, Julia—had he never saved your life, do you think you should have been attached to him as you are? Believe me, the rude blast that overset your boat was a prosperous gale of love to him.

Jul. Gratitude may have strengthened my attachment to Mr. Faulkland, but I loved him before he had preserved me; yet, surely, that alone were an obligation sufficient—

Lyd. Obligation! why, a water spaniel would have done as much! Well, I should never think of giving my heart to a man because he could swim!—What's here?

Enter Lucy, *in a hurry*, L.

Lucy. Oh, ma'am, here is Sir Anthony Absolute, just come home with your aunt!

Lyd. They'll not come here :—Lucy, do you watch.
[*Exit Lucy*, L.

Jul. Yet I must go ; Sir Anthony does not know I am here, and if we meet, he'll detain me, to show me the town. I'll take another opportunity of paying my respects to Mrs. Malaprop, when she shall treat me, as long as she chooses, with her select words, so ingeniously misapplied, without being mispronounced. [*Crosses*, R.

Enter LUCY, L.

Lucy. Oh, lud, ma'am ! They are both coming up stairs !

Lyd. Well, I'll not detain you.—Adieu, my dear Julia ! I'm sure you are in haste to send to Faulkland.—There—through my room you'll find another staircase.

Jul. Adieu ! [*Exit*, R.

Lyd. Here, my dear Lucy, hide these books.—Quick, quick.—Fling "Peregrine Pickle" under the toilet—throw "Roderick Random" into the closet—put "The Innocent Adultery" into "The Whole Duty of Man"—thrust "Lord Aimworth" under the sofa—cram "Ovid" behind the bolster—there—put "The Man of Feeling" into your pocket —Now for them ! [*Exit Lucy*, L.

Enter MRS. MALAPROP *and* SIR ANTHONY ABSOLUTE, L.

Mrs. M. There, Sir Anthony, there stands the deliberate simpleton, who wants to disgrace her family, and lavish herself on a fellow not worth a shilling.

Lyd. Madam, I thought you once——

Mrs. M. You thought, miss ! I don't know any business you have to think at all : thought does not become a young woman. But the point we would request of you is, that you will promise to forget this fellow—to illiterate him, I say, from your memory.

Lyd. Ah ! madam ! our memories are independent of our wills. It is not so easy to forget.

Mrs. M. But I say it is, miss ! there is nothing on earth so easy as to forget, if a person chooses to set about it. I'm sure I have as much forgot your poor dear uncle, as if he had never existed ; and I thought it my duty so to do ; and let me tell you, Lydia, these violent memories don't become a young woman.

Lyd. What crime, madam, have I committed, to be treated thus?

Mrs. M. Now don't attempt to extirpate yourself from the matter; you know I have proof controvertible of it. But tell me, will you promise me to do as you are bid? Will you take a husband of your friends' choosing?

Lyd. Madam, I must tell you plainly, that, had I no preference for any one else, the choice you have made would be my aversion.

Mrs. M. What business have you, miss, with preference and aversion? They don't become a young woman; and you ought to know, that, as both always wear off, 'tis safest, in matrimony, to begin with a little aversion. I am sure I hated your poor dear uncle before marriage, as if he'd been a black-a-moor; and yet, miss, you are sensible what a wife I made; and, when it pleased Heaven to release me from him, 'tis unknown what tears I shed! But, suppose we were going to give you another choice, will you promise us to give up this Beverley?

Lyd. Could I belie my thoughts so far as to give that promise, my actions would certainly as far belie my words.

Mrs. M. Take yourself to your room! You are fit company for nothing but your own ill humours.

Lyd. Willingly, ma'am; I cannot change for the worse. [*Exit*, R.

Mrs. M. There's a little intricate hussy for you!

Sir A. It is not to be wondered at, ma'am; all that is the natural consequence of teaching girls to read. In my way hither, Mrs. Malaprop, I observed your niece's maid coming forth from a circulating library: she had a book in each hand—they were half-bound volumes, with marble covers: from that moment, I guessed how full of duty I should see her mistress!

Mrs. M. Those are vile places, indeed!

Sir A. Madam, a circulating library in a town is as an evergreen tree of diabolical knowledge!—It blossoms through the year! And, depend on it, Mrs. Malaprop, that they who are so fond of handling the leaves, will long for the fruit at last.

Mrs. M. Fie, fie, Sir Anthony; you surely speak laconically.

Sir A. Why, Mrs. Malaprop, in moderation, now, what would you have a woman know?

Mrs. M. Observe me, Sir Anthony—I would by no means wish a daughter of mine to be a progeny of learning; I don't think so much learning becomes a young woman;—for instance—I would never let her meddle with Greek, or Hebrew, or Algebra, or Simony, or Fluxions, or Paradoxes, or such inflammatory branches of learning; nor will it be necessary for her to handle any of your mathematical, astronomical, diabolical instruments; but, Sir Anthony, I would send her, at nine years old, to a boarding-school, in order to learn a little ingenuity and artifice. Then, sir, she should have a supercilious knowledge in accounts; and, as she grew up, I would have her instructed in geometry, that she might know something of the contagious countries; above all, she should be taught orthodoxy. This, Sir Anthony, is what I would have a woman know; and I don't think there is a superstitious article in it.

Sir A. Well, well, Mrs. Malaprop, I will dispute the point no further with you: though I must confess, that you are a truly moderate and polite arguer, for almost every third word you say is on my side of the question.—But to the more important point in debate—you say you have no objection to my proposal?

Mrs. M. None, I assure you.—I am under no positive engagement with Mr. Acres; and as Lydia is so obstinate against him, perhaps your son may have better success.

Sir A. Well, madam, I will write for the boy directly.—He knows not a syllable of this yet, though I have for some time had the proposal in my head. He is at present with his regiment.

Mrs. M. We have never seen your son, Sir Anthony; but I hope no objection on his side.

Sir A. Objection!—let him object, if he dare!—No, no, Mrs. Malaprop; Jack knows that the least demur puts me in a frenzy directly. My process was always very simple—in his younger days, 'twas "Jack, do this,"—if he demurred, I knocked him down; and, if he grumbled at that, I always sent him out of the room.

Mrs. M. Ay, and the properest way, o'my conscience!—Nothing is so conciliating to young people, as severity. Well, Sir Anthony, I shall give Mr. Acres his discharge, and prepare Lydia to receive your son's invocations; and

I hope you will represent her to the Captain as an object not altogether illegible.

Sir A. Madam, I will handle the subject prudently. I must leave you; and let me beg you, Mrs. Malaprop, to enforce this matter roundly to the girl—take my advice, keep a tight hand—if she rejects this proposal, clap her under lock and key; and if you were just to let the servants forget to bring her dinner for three or four days you can't conceive how she'd come about. [*Exit*, L.

Mrs. M. Well, at any rate, I shall be glad to get her from under my intuition—she has somehow discovered my partiality for Sir Lucius O'Trigger. Sure, Lucy can't have betrayed me!—No, the girl is such a simpleton, I should have made her confess it.—Lucy! Lucy! [*Calls.*] Had she been one of your artificial ones, I should never have trusted her.

Enter Lucy, R.

Lucy. Did you call, ma'am?

Mrs. M. Yes, girl.—Did you see Sir Lucius while you was out?

Lucy. No, indeed, ma'am, not a glimpse of him.

Mrs. M. You are sure, Lucy, that you never mentioned——

Lucy. Oh, gemini! I'd sooner cut my tongue out!

Mrs. M. Well, don't let your simplicity be imposed on.

Lucy. No, ma'am.

Mrs. M. So, come to me presently, and I'll give you another letter to Sir Lucius—[*Crosses*, R.] but mind, Lucy, if ever you betray what you are intrusted with (unless it be other people's secrets to me), you forfeit my malevolence forever; and your being a simpleton shall be no excuse for your locality. [*Exit*, R.

Lucy. Ha! ha! ha! So, my dear simplicity, let me give you a little respite;—[*Altering her manner.*] Let girls in my station be as fond as they please of being expert and knowing in their trust, commend me to a mask of silliness, and a pair of sharp eyes for my own interest under it!—Let me see to what account have I turned my simplicity lately: [*Looks at a paper.*] "For abetting Miss Lydia Languish in a design of running away with an ensign! in money, sundry times, twelve pound twelve—gowns,

five; hats, ruffles, caps, &c., &c., numberless.—From the said ensign, within this last month, six guineas and a half. —Item, from Mrs. Malaprop, for betraying the young people to her"—when I found matters were likely to be discovered—" two guineas and a French shawl.—Item, from Mr. Acres, for carrying divers letters"—which I never delivered,—" two guineas and a pair of buckles.—Item, from Sir Lucius O'Trigger, three crowns, two gold pocket-pieces, and a silver snuff-box!" Well done, simplicity! yet I was forced to make my Hibernian believe that he was corresponding, not with the aunt, but with the niece; for, though not over rich, I found he had too much pride and delicacy to sacrifice the feelings of a gentleman to the necessities of his fortune. [*Exit*, R.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

Scene I.—*Captain Absolute's Lodgings.*

Enter Captain Absolute *and* Fag, R.

Fag. Sir, while I was there, Sir Anthony came in; I told him you had sent me to inquire after his health; and to know if he was at leisure to see you.

Capt. A. And what did he say, on hearing I was at Bath?

Fag. Sir, in my life, I never saw an elderly gentleman more astonished.

Capt. A. Well, sir, and what did you say?

Fag. Oh, I lied, sir—I forgot the precise lie, but, you may depend on't, he got no truth from me.—Yet, with submission, for fear of blunders in future, I should be glad to fix what has brought us to Bath, in order that we may lie a little consistently. Sir Anthony's servants were curious, sir, very curious indeed.

Capt. A. You have said nothing to them?

Fag. Oh, not a word, sir—not a word.—Mr. Thomas, indeed, the coachman (whom I take to be the discreetest of whips)——

Capt. A. 'Sdeath!—you rascal! you have not trusted him?

Fag. Oh, no, sir,—no—no—not a syllable, upon my veracity! He was, indeed, a little inquisitive; but I was sly, sir—devilish sly!—My master (said I), honest Thomas (you know, sir, one says honest to one's inferiors), is come to Bath to recruit—yes, sir—I said to recruit—and whether for men, money, or constitution, you know, sir, is nothing to him, nor any one else.

Capt. A. Well—recruit will do—let it be so——

Fag. Oh, sir, recruit will do surprisingly;—indeed, to give the thing an air, I told Thomas that your honour had already enlisted five disbanded chairmen, seven minority waiters, and thirteen billiard markers.

Capt. A. You blockhead, never say more than is necessary.

Fag. I beg pardon, sir—I beg pardon.—But, with submission, a lie is nothing unless well supported.—Sir, whenever I draw on my invention for a good current lie, I always forge endorsements as well as the bill.

Capt. A. Well, take care you don't hurt your credit by offering too much security. Is Mr. Faulkland returned?

Fag. He is above, sir, changing his dress.

Capt. A. Can you tell whether he has been informed of Sir Anthony's and Miss Melville's arrival?

Fag. I fancy not, sir; he has seen no one since he came in but his gentleman, who was with him at Bristol.—I think, sir, I hear Mr. Faulkland coming down——

Capt. A. Go, tell him I am here. [*Crosses*, R.

Fag. Yes, sir—[*Going.*] I beg pardon, sir, but should Sir Anthony call, you will do me the favour to remember that we are recruiting, if you please.

Capt. A. Well, well.

Fag. And in tenderness to my character, if your honor could bring in the chairmen and waiters, I shall esteem it as an obligation;—for though I never scruple a lie to serve my master, yet it hurts one's conscience to be found out.

[*Exit*, L.

Capt. A. Now for my whimsical friend:—If he does not know that his mistress is here, I'll tease him a little before I tell him——

Enter Fag, L.

Fag. Mr. Faulkland, sir. [*Exit*, L.

Re-enter FAG, L., *introduces* MR. FAULKLAND, *and exit*, R.

Capt. A. Faulkland, you're welcome to Bath again; you are punctual in your return.

Faul. Yes; I had nothing to detain me when I had finished the business I went on. Well, what news since I left you? How stand matters between you and Lydia?

Capt. A. 'Faith, much as they were.

Faul. Nay, then, you trifle too long—if you are sure of her, propose to the aunt, in your own character, and write to Sir Anthony for his consent.

Capt. A. Softly, softly; for though I am convinced my little Lydia would elope with me as Ensign Beverley, yet am I by no means certain that she would take me with the impediment of our friends' consent, a regular humdrum wedding, and the reversion of a good fortune on my side. Well, but Faulkland, you'll dine with us to-day at the hotel?

Faul. Indeed, I cannot; I am not in spirits to be of such a party.

Capt. A. By heavens! I shall forswear your company. You are the most teasing, captious, incorrigible lover!—Do love like a man.

Faul. Ah! Jack, your heart and soul are not like mine, fixed immutably on one only object. You throw for a large stake, but, losing, you could stake and throw again; but I have set my sum of happiness on this cast, and not to succeed were to be stripped of all.

Capt. A. But, for heaven's sake! what grounds for apprehension can your whimsical brain conjure up at present?

Faul. What grounds for apprehension, did you say? Heavens! are there not a thousand? I fear for her spirits—her health—her life—Oh! Jack, when delicate and feeling souls are separated, there is not a feature in the sky, not a movement of the elements, not an aspiration of the breeze, but hints some cause for a lover's apprehension!

Capt. A. Ay, but we may choose whether we will take the hint or not.—So, then, Faulkland, if you were convinced that Julia were well, and in spirits, you would be entirely content?

Faul. I should be happy beyond measure—I am anxious only for that

Capt. A. Then cure your anxiety at once—Miss Melville is in perfect health, and is at this moment in Bath.

Faul. Nay, Jack—don't trifle with me.

Capt. A. She is arrived here with my father, within this hour.

Faul. Can you be serious?

Capt. A. I thought you knew Sir Anthony better than to be surprised at a sudden whim of this kind.—Seriously, then, it is as I tell you, upon my honour.

Faul. My dear Jack—now nothing on earth can give me a moment's uneasiness.

Enter Fag, R.

Fag. Sir, Mr. Acres, just arrived, is below.

Capt. A. Stay, Faulkland, this Acres lives within a mile of Sir Anthony, and he shall tell you how your mistress has been ever since you left her. Fag, show the gentleman up. [*Exit Fag*, R.

Faul. What, is he much acquainted in the family?

Capt. A. Oh, very intimate: he is likewise a rival of mine—that is, of my other self's, for he does not think his friend, Captain Absolute, ever saw the lady in question; and it is ridiculous enough to hear him complain to me of one Beverley, a conceited, skulking rival, who——

Faul. Hush!—He's here!

Enter Acres, R.

Acres. Hah! my dear friend, noble captain, and honest Jack, how dost thou? just arrived, 'faith, as you see.—Sir, your humble servant. Warm work on the roads, Jack—odds whips and wheels! I've travelled like a comet, with a tail of dust all the way, as long as the Mall.

Capt. A. Ah! Bob, you are indeed an eccentric planet, but we know your attraction hither; give me leave to introduce Mr. Faulkland to you; Mr. Faulkland, Mr. Acres.

Acres. Sir, I am most heartily glad to see you; [*Crosses*, c.] sir, I solicit your connexions.—Hey, Jack—what, this is Mr. Faulkland, who——

Capt. A. Ay, Bob, Miss Melville's Mr. Faulkland.

Acres. Ah! Mr. Faulkland, you are, indeed, a happy man!

Faul. I have not seen Miss Melville yet, sir; I hope she enjoyed full health and spirits in Devonshire?

Acres. Never knew her better in my life, sir; never better. Odds blushes and blooms! she has been as healthy as the German Spa.

Faul. Indeed! I did hear that she had been a little indisposed.

Acres. False, false, sir; only said to vex you: quite the reverse, I assure you. [*Retires up the Stage.*

Faul. There, Jack, you see she has the advantage of me; I had almost fretted myself ill.

Capt. A. Now are you angry with your mistress for not having been sick.

Faul. No, no, you misunderstand me; yet surely a little trifling indisposition is not an unnatural consequence of absence from those we love. Now confess—isn't there something unkind in this violent, robust, unfeeling health?

Capt. A. Oh, it was very unkind of her to be well in your absence, to be sure!

Acres. Good apartments, Jack. [*Coming forward.*

Faul. Well, sir, but you was saying that Miss Melville has been so exceedingly well—what, then, she has been merry and gay, I suppose?—always in spirits, hey?

Acres. Merry! odds crickets! she has been the belle and spirit of the company wherever she has been—so lively and entertaining; so full of wit and humour!

[*Retires up the Stage.*

Faul. By my soul! there is an innate levity in woman that nothing can overcome!—What! happy, and I away?

Capt. A. Just now you were only apprehensive for your mistress's spirits.

Faul. Why, Jack, have *I* been the joy and spirit of the company?

Capt. A. No, indeed, you have not.

Faul. Have I been lively and entertaining?

Capt. A. Oh, upon my word, I acquit you.

Faul. Have I been full of wit and humour?

Capt. A. No, 'faith, to do you justice, you have been confoundedly stupid, indeed.

Acres. (R.) What's the matter with the gentleman?

Capt. A. He is only expressing his great satisfaction at hearing that Julia has been so well and happy—that's all—hey, Faulkland?

Faul. Yes, yes, she has a happy disposition!

Acres. [*Crosses,* c.] That she has, indeed—then she is so accomplished—so sweet a voice—so expert at her harpsichord—such a mistress of flat and sharp, squallante, rumblante, and quiverante!—there was this time month—odds minums and crotchets! how she did chirrup at Mrs. Piano's concert! [*Sings.*] *My heart's my own, my will is free.* That's very like her. [*Goes up the Stage.*

Faul. Fool! fool that I am! to fix all my happiness on such a trifler! 'Sdeath! to make herself the pipe and ballad-monger of a circle! to soothe her light heart with catches and glees! What can you say to this, sir?

Capt. A. Why, that I should be glad to hear my mistress had been so merry, sir.

Faul. Nay, nay, nay—I'm not sorry that she has been happy—no, no, I am glad of that—but she has been dancing, too, I doubt not.

Acres. [*In the* c.] What does the gentleman say about dancing?

Capt. A. He says the lady we speak of dances as well as she sings.

Acres. Ay, truly does she—there was at our last race ball——

Faul. Hell and the devil! [*Acres goes suddenly to* R.] There! there—I told you so! I told you so! oh! she thrives in my absence!—Dancing!

Capt. A. For heaven's sake, Faulkland, don't expose yourself so!—Suppose she has danced, what then?—does not the ceremony of society often oblige——

Faul. Well, well, I'll contain myself—perhaps, as you say—for form's sake. [*Crosses,* c.] I say, Mr.—Mr.—What's his d—d name?

Capt. A. Acres, Acres.

Faul. Oh, ay, Mr. Acres, you were praising Miss Melville's manner of dancing a minuet—hey?

Acres. Oh, I dare insure her for that—but what I was going to speak of, was her country dancing:—odds swimmings! she has such an air with her!

Faul. Now, disappointment on her!—defend this, Absolute! why don't you defend this?—country dances! jigs and reels! am I to blame now? A minuet I could have forgiven—I should not have minded that—I say, I should not have regarded a minuet—but country dances! Zounds,

had she made one in a cotillion—I believe I could have forgiven even that—but to be monkey-led for a night!—to run the gauntlet through a string of amorous palming puppies!—to show paces like a managed filly!—Oh, Jack, there never can be but one man in the world whom a truly modest and delicate woman ought to pair with in a country dance; and, even then, the rest of the couples should be her great uncles and aunts! [*Crosses*, L.

Capt. A. Ay, to be sure! grandfathers and grandmothers!

Faul. If there be but one vicious mind in the set, it will spread like a contagion—the action of their pulse beats to the lascivious movement of the jig—their quivering, warm-breathed sighs impregnate the air—the atmosphere becomes electrical to love, and each amorous spark darts through every link of the chain!—I must leave you—I own I am somewhat flurried, and that confounded looby has perceived it. [*Going.*

Capt. A. Nay, but stay, Faulkland, and thank Mr. Acres for his good news.

Faul. Damn his news! [*Exit*, L.

Capt. A. Ha! ha! ha! poor Faulkland! Five minutes since—"nothing on earth could give him a moment's uneasiness!"

Acres. The gentleman wasn't angry at my praising his mistress, was he?

Capt. A. A little jealous, I believe, Bob!

Acres. You don't say so? Ha! ha! jealous of me!—that's a good joke!

Capt. A. There's nothing strange in that, Bob; let me tell you, that sprightly grace and insinuating manner of yours, will do some mischief among the girls here.

Acres. Ah! you joke—ha! ha! mischief—ha! ha! but you know I am not my own property! my dear Lydia has forestalled me. She could never abide me in the country, because I used to dress so badly—but, odds frogs and tambours! I sha'n't take matters so here—now ancient madam has no voice in it—I'll make my old clothes know who's master—I shall straightway cashier the hunting-flock, and render my leather breeches incapable—My hair has been in training some time. [*Showing his hair in curl papers.*

Capt. A. Indeed!

Acres. Ay—and tho'ff the side curls are a little restive, my hind part takes it very kindly.

Capt. A. Oh, you'll polish, I doubt not.

Acres. Absolutely I propose so—then, if I can find out this Ensign Beverley, odds triggers and flints! I'll make him know the difference o't.

Capt. A. Spoke like a man—but, pray, Bob, I observe you have got an odd kind of a new method of swearing—

Acres. Ha! ha! you've taken notice of it—'tis genteel, isn't it?—I didn't invent it myself, though; but a commander in our militia, a great scholar, I assure you, says that there is no meaning in the common oaths, and that nothing but their antiquity makes them respectable; because, he says, the ancients would never stick to an oath or two, but would say by Jove! or by Bacchus! or by Mars! or by Venus! or by Pallas! according to the sentiment;—so that to swear with propriety, says my little Major, the "oath should be an echo to the sense;" and this we call the oath referential, or sentimental swearing—ha! ha! ha! 'tis genteel, isn't it?

Capt. A. Very genteel, and very new indeed—and I dare say will supplant all other figures of imprecation.

Acres. Ay, ay, the best terms will grow obsolete—Damns have had their day.

Enter Fag, r.

Fag. Sir, there is a gentleman below desires to see you—Shall I show him into the parlour?

Capt. A. Ay—you may.

Acres. Well, I must be gone——

Capt. A. Stay; who is it, Fag?

Fag. Your father, sir.

Capt. A. You puppy, why didn't you show him up directly? [*Exit Fag*, r.

Acres. You have business with Sir Anthony.—I expect a message from Mrs. Malaprop, at my lodgings. I have sent also to my dear friend, Sir Lucius O'Trigger.—Adieu, Jack, we must meet at night, when you shall give me a dozen bumpers to little Lydia. [*Exit*, r.

Capt. A. That I will, with all my heart. Now for a parental lecture—I hope he has heard nothing of the business that has brought me here—I wish the gout had held him fast in Devonshire, with all my soul!

Enter Sir Anthony, r.

Sir, I am delighted to see you here, and looking so well! —your sudden arrival at Bath made me apprehensive for your health.

Sir A. Very apprehensive, I dare say, Jack.—What, you are recruiting here, hey?

Capt. A. Yes, sir, I am on duty.

Sir A. Well, Jack, I am glad to see you, though I did not expect it; for I was going to write to you on a little matter of business.—Jack, I have been considering that I grow old and infirm, and shall probably not trouble you long.

Capt. A. Pardon me, sir, I never saw you look more strong and hearty, and I pray fervently that you may continue so.

Sir A. I hope your prayers may be heard, with all my heart. Well, then, Jack, I have been considering that I am so strong and hearty, I may continue to plague you a long time.—Now, Jack, I am sensible that the income of your commission, and what I have hitherto allowed you, is but a small pittance for a lad of your spirit.

Capt. A. Sir, you are very good.

Sir A. And it is my wish, while yet I live, to have my boy make some figure in the world.—I have resolved, therefore, to fix you at once in a noble independence.

Capt. A. Sir, your kindness overpowers me.—Yet, sir. I presume you would not wish me to quit the army?

Sir A. Oh! that shall be as your wife chooses.

Capt. A. My wife, sir!

Sir A. Ay, ay, settle that between you—settle that between you.

Capt. A. A wife, sir, did you say?

Sir A. Ay, a wife—why, did not I mention her before?

Capt. A. Not a word of her, sir.

Sir A. Odd so! I musn't forget her, though—Yes, Jack, the independence I was talking of, is by a marriage—the fortune is saddled with a wife—but I suppose that makes no difference?

Capt. A. Sir! sir! you amaze me!

Sir A. Why, what the devil's the matter with the fool? Just now you were all gratitude and duty.

Capt. A. I was, sir,—you talked to me of independence and a fortune, but not a word of a wife.

Sir A. Why—what difference does that make? Odds life, sir! if you have the estate, you must take it with the live stock on it, as it stands.

Capt. A. Pray, sir, who is the lady?

Sir A. What's that to you, sir?—Come, give me your promise to love, and to marry her directly.

Capt. A. Sure, sir, this is not very reasonable, to summon my affections for a lady I know nothing of!

Sir A. I am sure, sir, 'tis more unreasonable in you to object to a lady you know nothing of.

Capt. A. You must excuse me, sir, if I tell you, once for all, that in this point I cannot obey you.

Sir A. Harkye, Jack!—I have heard you for some time with patience—I have been cool—quite cool; but take care—you know I am compliance itself—when I am not thwarted; no one more easily led—when I have my own way;—but don't put me in a frenzy.

Capt. A. Sir, I must repeat it—in this, I cannot obey you.

Sir A. Now, damn me if ever I call you Jack again while I live!

Capt. A. Nay, sir, but hear me.

Sir A. Sir, I won't hear a word—not a word! not one word! so give me your promise by a nod—and I'll tell you what, Jack—I mean you dog—if you don't, by——

Capt. A. What, sir, promise to link myself to some mass of ugliness?

Sir A. Zounds! Sirrah! the lady shall be as ugly as I choose: she shall have a hump on each shoulder; she shall be as crooked as the Crescent; her one eye shall roll like the bull's in Cox's Museum—she shall have a skin like a mummy, and the beard of a Jew—she shall be all this, sirrah!—yet I'll make you ogle her all day, and sit up all night, to write sonnets on her beauty.

Capt. A. This is reason and moderation indeed!

Sir A. None of your sneering, puppy! no grinning, jackanapes!

Capt. A. Indeed, sir, I never was in a worse humour for mirth in my life.

Sir A. 'Tis false, sir; I know you are laughing in your sleeve; I know you'll grin when I am gone, sirrah!

Capt. A. Sir, I hope I know my duty better.

Sir A. None of your passion, sir! none of your violence, if you please—It won't do with me, I promise you.

Capt. A. Indeed, sir, I never was cooler in my life.

Sir A. 'Tis a confounded lie!—I know you are in a passion in your heart; I know you are, you hypocritical young dog—but it won't do.

Capt. A. Nay, sir, upon my word——

Sir A. So, you will fly out! Can't you be cool, like me?—What the devil good can passion do?—passion is of no service, you impudent, insolent, over-bearing reprobate!—There, you sneer again!—don't provoke me! but you rely upon the mildness of my temper—you do, you dog! you play upon the meekness of my disposition! Yet take care—the patience of a saint may be overcome at last!—but mark!—I give you six hours and a half to consider of this: if you then agree, without any condition, to do everything on earth that I choose, why—confound you, I may in time forgive you—If not, zounds! don't enter the same hemisphere with me! don't dare to breathe the same air, or use the same light with me; but get an atmosphere and a sun of your own! I'll strip you of your commission; I'll lodge a five-and-threepence in the hands of trustees, and you shall live on the interest. I'll disown you, I'll disinherit you, I'll unget you! and, damn me! if ever I call you Jack again! [*Exit*, R.

Capt. A. Mild, gentle, considerate father! I kiss your hands.

Enter Fag, R.

Fag. Assuredly, sir, our father is wroth to a degree; he comes down stairs eight or ten steps at a time, muttering, growling, and thumping the banisters all the way; I and the cook's dog stand bowing at the door—rap! he gives me a stroke on the head with his cane; bids me carry that to my master; then, kicking the poor turnspit into the area, damns us all for a puppy triumvirate!—Upon my credit, sir, were I in your place, and found my father such very bad company, I should certainly drop his acquaintance.

Capt. A. Cease your impertinence, sir—did you come in for nothing more?—Stand out of the way.

[*Pushes him aside and exit*, R.

Fag. So! Sir Anthony trims my master;—he is afraid to reply to his father, then vents his spleen on poor Fag! When one is vexed by one person, to revenge one's self on another, who happens to come in the way, shows the worst of temper, the basest——

Enter Errand Boy, R.

Boy. Mr. Fag! Mr. Fag! your master calls you.

Fag. Well, you little dirty puppy, you needn't bawl so —the meanest disposition, the——

Boy. Quick, quick! Mr. Fag.

Fag. Quick! quick! you impudent jackanapes! am I to be commanded by you, too, you little, impertinent, insolent, kitchen-bred? [*Kicks him off*, R.

Scene II.—*The North Parade.*

Enter Lucy, L.

Lucy. So, I shall have another rival to add to my mistress's list—Captain Absolute; however, I shall not enter his name till my purse has received due notice in form. Sir Lucius is generally more punctual, when he expects to hear from his dear Dalia, as he calls her:—I wonder he's not here!

Enter Sir Lucius O'Trigger, R.

Sir L. Hah! my little ambassadress—upon my conscience I have been looking for you; I have been on the South Parade this half hour.

Lucy. [*Speaking simply.*] Oh, gemini! and I have been waiting for your worship here on the North.

Sir L. 'Faith! may be that was the reason we did not meet; and it is very comical, too, how you could go out, and I not see you—for I was only taking a nap at the Parade Coffee-House, and I chose the window, on purpose that I might not miss you.

Lucy. My stars! Now I'd wager a sixpence I went by while you were asleep.

Sir L. Sure enough, it must have been so—and I never dreamt it was so late, till I waked. Well, but my little girl, have you got nothing for me?

Lucy. Yes, but I have—I've got a letter for you in my pocket.

Sir L. I'faith! I guessed you weren't come empty-handed—well—let me see what the dear creature says.

Lucy. There, Sir Lucius. [*Gives him a letter.*

Sir L. [*Reads.*] "*Sir,—There is often a sudden incentive impulse in love, that has a greater induction than years of domestic combination: such was the commotion I felt at the first superfluous view of Sir Lucius O'Trigger.*" Very pretty, upon my word! "*Female punctuation forbids me to say more; yet let me add, that it will give me joy infallible to find Sir Lucius worthy the last criterion of my affections.* "*Yours, while meretricious,* DELIA." Upon my conscience! Lucy, your lady is a great mistress of language! 'Faith! she's quite the queen of the dictionary!—for the devil a word dare refuse coming at her call—though one would think it was quite out of hearing.

Lucy. Ay, sir, a lady of her experience.

Sir L. Experience! what, at seventeen?

Lucy. Oh, true, sir—but then she reads so—my stars! how she will read off hand!

Sir L. 'Faith, she must be very deep read, to write this way—though she is rather an arbitrary writer, too—for here are a great many poor words pressed into the service of this note, that would get their *habeas corpus* from any court in Christendom. However, when affection guides the pen, he must be a brute who finds fault with the style.

Lucy. Ah! Sir Lucius, if you were to hear how she talks of you!

Sir L. Oh, tell her I'll make her the best husband in the world, and Lady O'Trigger into the bargain!—But we must get the old gentlewoman's consent, and do every thing fairly.

Lucy. Nay, Sir Lucius, I thought you wa'n't rich enough to be so nice.

Sir L. Upon my word, young woman, you have hit it: I am so poor, that I can't afford to do a dirty action.—If I did not want money, I'd steal your mistress and her fortune with a great deal of pleasure.—However, my pretty girl [*Giving her money,*] here's a little something to buy you a ribband; and meet me in the evening, and I will give you an answer to this.—So, hussy, take a kiss beforehand, to put you in mind. [*Kisses her.*

Lucy. Oh, lud! Sir Lucius—I never see such a gemman! My lady won't like you, if you're so impudent.

Sir L. 'Faith, she will, Lucy—that same—pho! what's the name of it?—modesty!—is a quality in a lover more praised by the women than liked: so, if your mistress asks you whether Sir Lucius ever gave you a kiss, tell her fifty, my dear.

Lucy. What, would you have me tell her a lie?

Sir L. Ah, then, you baggage! I'll make it a truth presently.

Lucy. For shame, now; here is some one coming.

Sir L. O'faith, I'll quiet your conscience!

[*Sees Fag.—Exit, singing,* R.

Enter Fag, L.

Fag. So, so, ma'am.—I humbly beg pardon.

Lucy. Oh, lud!—now, Mr. Fag—you flurry one so!

Fag. Come, come, Lucy, here's no one by—so a little less simplicity, with a grain or two more sincerity, if you please—You play false with us, madam—I saw you give the baronet a letter. My master shall know this—and if he don't call him out—I will.

Lucy. Ha! ha! ha! you gentlemen's gentlemen are so hasty!—That letter was from Mrs. Malaprop, simpleton. She is taken with Sir Lucius's address.

Fag. How! what taste some people have! Why, I suppose I have walked by her window an hundred times. But what says our young lady? any message to my master?

Lucy. Sad news, Mr. Fag! A worse rival than Acres? Sir Anthony Absolute has proposed his son.

Fag. What, Captain Absolute?

Lucy. Even so.—I overheard it all.

Fag. Ha! ha! ha! very good, 'faith! Good bye, Lucy, I must away with this news. [*Crosses,* R.

Lucy. Well, you may laugh, but it is true, I assure you. [*Going,* L.] But, Mr. Fag, tell your master not to be cast down by this.

Fag. Oh, he'll be so disconsolate!

Lucy. And charge him not to think of quarrelling with young Absolute.

Fag. Never fear—never fear!

Lucy. Be sure, bid him keep up his spirits.
Fag. We will—we will. [*Exeunt, Fag,* R., *Lucy,* L.

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The North Parade.*

Enter CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE, L.

Capt. A. 'Tis just as Fag told me, indeed!—Whimsical enough, 'faith! My father wants to force me to marry the very girl I am plotting to run away with! He must not know of my connexion with her yet awhile. He has too summary a method of proceeding in these matters; however, I'll read my recantation instantly. My conversion is something sudden, indeed; but I can assure him, it is very sincere.—So, so, here he comes—he looks plaguy gruff! [*Steps aside,* L.

Enter SIR ANTHONY, R.

Sir A. No—I'll die sooner than forgive him! Die, did I say? I'll live these fifty years to plague him. At our last meeting, his impudence had almost put me out of temper—an obstinate, passionate, self-willed boy! Who can he take after? This is my return for getting him before all his brothers and sisters! for putting him, at twelve years old, into a marching regiment, and allowing him fifty pounds a year, besides his pay, ever since! But I have done with him—he's anybody's son for me—I never will see him more—never—never—never—never.

Capt. A. Now for a penitential face!
[*Comes forward on the* L.

Sir A. Fellow, get out of my way! [*Crosses,* R.

Capt. A. Sir, you see a penitent before you.

Sir A. I see an impudent scoundrel before me.

Capt. A. A sincere penitent. I am come, sir, to acknowledge my error, and to submit entirely to your will.

Sir A. What's that?

Capt. A. I have been revolving, and reflecting, and considering on your past goodness, and kindness, andcondescension to me.

Sir A. Well, sir?

Capt. A. I have been likewise weighing and balancing, what you were pleased to mention concerning duty, and obedience, and authority.

Sir A. Why, now you talk sense, absolute sense; I never heard anything more sensible in my life. Confound you, you shall be Jack again!

Capt. A. I am happy in the appellation.

Sir A. Why then, Jack, my dear Jack, I will now inform you who the lady really is. Nothing but your passion and violence, you silly fellow, prevented me telling you at first. Prepare, Jack, for wonder and rapture—prepare! What think you of Miss Lydia Languish?

Capt. A. Languish! What, the Languishes of Worcestershire?

Sir A. Worcestershire! No! Did you never meet Mrs. Malaprop, and her niece, Miss Languish, who came into our country just before you were last ordered to your regiment.

Capt. A. Malaprop! Languish! I don't remember ever to have heard the name before. Yet, stay: I think I do recollect something. Languish—Languish! She squints, don't she? A little red-haired girl?

Sir A. Squints! A red-haired girl! Zounds, no!

Capt. A. Then I must have forgot: it can't be the same person.

Sir A. Jack, Jack! what think you of blooming, love-breathing seventeen?

Capt. A. As to that, sir, I am quite indifferent: if I can please you in the matter, 'tis all I desire.

Sir A. Nay, but Jack, such eyes! such eyes! so innocently wild! so bashfully irresolute! Not a glance but speaks and kindles some thought of love! Then, Jack, her cheeks! her cheeks, Jack! so deeply blushing at the insinuations of her tell-tale eyes! Then, Jack, her lips! Oh, Jack, lips, smiling at their own discretion! and, if not smiling, more sweetly pouting—more lovely in sullenness! Then, Jack, her neck! Oh! Jack! Jack!

Capt. A. And which is to be mine, sir: the niece, or the aunt?

Sir A. Why, you unfeeling, insensible puppy, I despise you! When I was of your age, such a description would have made me fly like a rocket! The aunt, indeed! Odds life! when I run away with your mother, I would not have touched any thing old or ugly to gain an empire!

Capt. A. Not to please your father, sir?

Sir A. To please my father—zounds! not to please—Oh! my father? Oddso! yes, yes! if my father, indeed, had desired—that's quite another matter. Though he wasn't the indulgent father that I am, Jack.

Capt. A. I dare say not, sir.

Sir A. But, Jack, you are not sorry to find your mistress is so beautiful?

Capt. A. Sir, I repeat it, if I please you in this affair, 'tis all I desire. Not that I think a woman the worse for being handsome; but, sir, if you please to recollect, you before hinted something about a hump or two, one eye, and a few more graces of that kind. Now, without being very nice, I own I should rather choose a wife of mine to have the usual number of limbs, and a limited quantity of back; and though one eye may be very agreeable, yet, as the prejudice has always run in favour of two, I would not wish to affect a singularity in that article.

Sir A. What a phlegmatic sot it is! Why, sirrah, you are an anchorite! a vile, insensible stock! You a soldier! you're a walking block, fit only to dust the company's regimentals on! Odds life, I've a great mind to marry the girl myself!

Capt. A. I am entirely at your disposal, sir; if you should think of addressing Miss Languish yourself, I suppose you would have me marry the aunt; or if you should change your mind, and take the old lady, 'tis the same to me—I'll marry the niece.

Sir A. Upon my word, Jack, thou art either a very great hypocrite, or—but, come, I know your indifference on such a subject, must be all a lie—I'm sure it must, Come, now, damn your demure face; come, confess, Jack, you have been lying, ha'nt you? You have been playing the hypocrite, hey? I'll never forgive you, if you ha'nt been lying and playing the hypocrite.

Capt. A. I am sorry, sir, that the respect and duty which I bear to you, should be so mistaken.

Sir A. Hang your respect and duty! But come along with me. [*Crosses to* L.] I'll write a note to Mrs. Malaprop, and you shall visit the lady directly. Her eyes shall be the Promethean torch to you—come along, I'll never forgive you, if you don't come back stark mad with rapture and impatience—if you don't, 'egad, I'll marry the girl myself! [*Exeunt*, L.

Scene II.—*Julia's Dressing-Room.*

Enter Faulkland, L.

Faulk. They told me Julia would return directly: I wonder she is not yet come!—How mean does this captious, unsatisfied temper of mine, appear to my cooler judgment! What tender, honest joy sparkled in her eyes, when we met! How delicate was the warmth of her expressions!—I was ashamed to appear less happy, though I had come resolved to wear a face of coolness and upbraiding. Sir Anthony's presence prevented my proposed expostulations: yet I must be satisfied that she has not been so very happy in my absence. She is coming—Yes, I know the nimbleness of her tread, when she thinks her impatient Faulkland counts the moments of her stay.

Enter Julia, R.

Jul. I had not hoped to see you again so soon.

Faulk. Could I, Julia, be contented with my first welcome, restrained, as we were, by the presence of a third person?

Jul. Oh, Faulkland! when your kindness can make me thus happy, let me not think that I discovered something of coolness in your first salutation.

Faulk. 'Twas but your fancy, Julia. I was rejoiced to see you—to see you in such health: sure I had no cause for coldness!

Jul. Nay, then, I see you have taken something ill: you must not conceal from me what it is.

Faulk. Well, then, shall I own to you, that my joy at hearing of your health and arrival here, by your neighbour Acres, was somewhat damped, by his dwelling much on the high spirits you had enjoyed in Devonshire; on your mirth—your singing—dancing—and I know not

what! for such is my temper, Julia, that I should regard every mirthful moment in your absence, as a treason to constancy. The mutual tear, that steals down the cheek of parting lovers, is a compact, that no smile shall live there till they meet again.

Jul. Must I never cease to tax my Faulkland with this teasing, minute caprice? Can the idle reports of a silly boor weigh, in your breast, against my tried affection?

Faulk. They have no weight with me, Julia: no, no, I am happy, if you have been so—yet only say that you did not sing with mirth—say that you thought of Faulkland in the dance.

Jul. I never can be happy in your absence. If I wear a countenance of content, it is to show that my mind holds no doubt of my Faulkland's truth. Believe me, Faulkland, I mean not to upbraid you, when I say, that I have often dressed sorrow in smiles, lest my friends should guess whose unkindness had caused my tears.

Faulk. You were ever all goodness to me! Oh, I am a brute, when I but admit a doubt of your true constancy!

Jul. If ever, without such cause from you as I will not suppose possible, you find my affections veering but a point, may I become a proverbial scoff for levity and base ingratitude!

Faulk. Ah, Julia! that last word is grating to me! I would I had no title to your gratitude! Search your heart, Julia: perhaps what you have mistaken for love, is but the warm effusion of a too thankful heart!

Jul. For what quality must I love you?

Faulk. For no quality: to regard me for any quality of mind or understanding, were only to esteem me! And for person—I have often wished myself deformed, to be convinced that I owed no obligation there for any part of your affection.

Jul. Where nature has bestowed a show of nice attention in the features of a man, he should laugh at it as misplaced. I have seen men, who, in this vain article, perhaps, might rank above you; but my heart has never asked my eyes, if it were so or not.

Faulk. Now, this is not well from you, Julia: I despise person in a man, yet, if you love me as I wish, though I were an Æthiop, you'd think none so fair.

Jul. I see you are determined to be unkind—The contract, which my poor father bound us in, gives you more than a lover's privilege.

Faulk. Again, Julia, you raise ideas that feed and justify my doubts. How shall I be sure, had you remained unbound in thought or promise, that I should still have been the object of your persevering love?

Jul. Then try me now.—Let us be free as strangers as to what is past: my heart will not feel more liberty.

Faulk. There, now! so hasty, Julia! so anxious to be free! If your love for me were fixed and ardent, you would not loose your hold, even though I wished it!

Jul. Oh, you torture me to the heart! I cannot bear it!

Faulk. I do not mean to distress you: if I loved you less, I should never give you an uneasy moment. I would not boast, yet let me say, that I have neither age, person, nor character, to found dislike on; my fortune such, as few ladies could be charged with indiscretion in the match. Oh, Julia! when love receives such countenance from prudence, nice minds will be suspicious of its birth.

Jul. I know not whither your insinuations would tend; but as they seem pressing to insult me, I will spare you the regret of having done so—I have given you no cause for this! [*Exit crying*, R.

Faulk. In tears! stay, Julia—stay, but for a moment—The door is fastened! Julia! my soul! but for one moment!—I hear her sobbing! 'Sdeath! what a brute am I to use her thus!—Yet stay—Ay, she is coming now: how little resolution there is in woman! how a few soft words can turn them! [*Sits down and sings.*] No, Zounds! she's not coming, nor don't intend it, I suppose! This is not steadiness, but obstinacy! Yet I deserve it. What, after so long an absence, to quarrel with her tenderness! 'twas barbarous and unmanly!—I should be ashamed to see her now.—I'll wait till her just resentment is abated, and when I distress her so again, may I lose her for ever. [*Exit*, L.

SCENE III.—*Mrs. Malaprop's Lodgings.*

Enter MRS. MALAPROP, *with a Letter in her hand*, CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE *following*, L.

Mrs. M. Your being Sir Anthony's son, Captain, would

itself be a sufficient accommodation; but from the ingenuity of your appearance, I am convinced you deserve the character here given of you.

Capt. A. Permit me to say, madam, that as I have never yet had the pleasure of seeing Miss Languish, my principal inducement in this affair, at present, is the honour of being allied to Mrs. Malaprop, of whose intellectual accomplishments, elegant manners, and unaffected learning, no tongue is silent.

Mrs. M. Sir, you do me infinite honour! I beg, Captain, you'll be seated—[*Both sit.*]—Ah! few gentlemen, now-a-days, know how to value the ineffectual qualities in a woman! few think how a little knowledge becomes a gentlewoman! Men have no sense now but for the worthless flower of beauty.

Capt. A. It is but too true, indeed, ma'am; yet I fear our ladies should share the blame; they think our admiration of beauty so great, that knowledge, in them, would be superfluous. Thus, like garden trees, they seldom show fruit, till time has robbed them of the more specious blossoms: few, like Mrs. Malaprop, and the orange-tree, are rich in both at once.

Mrs. M. Sir, you overpower me with good breeding—[*Aside.*] He is the very pine-apple of politeness!—You are not ignorant, Captain, that this giddy girl has, somehow, contrived to fix her affections on a beggarly, strolling, eaves-dropping ensign, whom none of us have seen, and nobody knows anything of.

Capt. A. Oh, I have heard the silly affair before. I'm not at all prejudiced against her on that account. But it must be very distressing, indeed, to you, ma'am.

Mrs. M. Oh, it gives me the hydrostatics to such a degree!—I thought she had persisted from corresponding with him; but behold, this very day, I have intercepted another letter from the fellow—I believe I have it in my pocket.

Capt. A. Oh, the devil! my last note! [*Aside.*

Mrs. M. Ay, here it is.

Capt. A. Ay, my note, indeed! Oh, the little traitress, Lucy! [*Aside.*

Mrs. M. There, perhaps you may know the writing. [*Gives him the Letter.*

Capt. A. I think I have seen the hand before—yes, I certainly must have seen this hand before.

Mrs. M. Nay, but read it, Captain.

Capt. A. [*Reads.*] "My soul's idol, my adored Lydia!" —Very tender, indeed!

Mrs. M. Tender! ay, and profane too, o'my conscience!

Capt. A. "I am excessively alarmed at the intelligence you send me, the more so as my new rival"—

Mrs. M. That's you, sir.

Capt. A. "Has universally the character of being an accomplished gentleman, and a man of honour."—Well, that's handsome enough.

Mrs. M. Oh, the fellow has some design in writing so.

Capt. A. That he had, I'll answer for him, ma'am.

Mrs. M. But go on, sir—you'll see presently.

Capt. A. "As for the old weather-beaten she-dragon, who guards you"—Who can he mean by that?

Mrs. M. Me, sir—me—he means me there—what do you think now?—but go on a little further.

Capt. A. Impudent scoundrel!—"it shall go hard, but I will elude her vigilance! as I am told that the same ridiculous vanity, which makes her dress up her coarse features, and deck her dull chat with hard words which she don't understand"—

Mrs. M. There, sir, an attack upon my language! what do you think of that?—an aspersion upon my parts of speech! was ever such a brute! Sure, if I reprehend anything in this world, it is the use of my oracular tongue, and a nice derangement of epitaphs.

Capt. A. He deserves to be hanged and quartered! let me see—"same ridiculous vanity"—

Mrs. M. You need not read it again, sir!

Capt. A. I beg pardon, ma'am—"does also lay her open to the grossest deceptions from flattery and pretended admiration"—an impudent coxcomb—"so that I have a scheme to see you shortly, with the old harridan's consent, and even to make her a go-between in our interviews."—Was ever such assurance!

Mrs. M. Did you ever hear any thing like it? [*They rise.*] He'll elude my vigilance, will he?—yes, yes!—ha! ha! he's very likely to enter these doors!—we'll try who can plot best!

Capt. A. So we will, ma'am—so we will.—Ha! ha! ha! a conceited puppy! ha! ha! ha!—Well, but Mrs. Malaprop, as the girl seems so infatuated by this fellow, suppose you were to wink at her corresponding with him for a little time—let her even plot an elopement with him—then do you connive at her escape—while I, just in the nick, will have the fellow laid by the heels, and fairly contrive to carry her off in his stead.

Mrs. M. I am delighted with the scheme; never was any thing better perpetrated.

Capt. A. But, pray, could I not see the lady for a few minutes now?—I should like to try her temper a little.

Mrs. M. Why, I don't know—I doubt she is not prepared for a visit of this kind.—There is a decorum in these matters.

Capt. A. O Lord, she won't mind me!—only tell her, Beverley—

Mrs. M. Sir!

Capt. A. Gently, good tongue! [*Aside.*

Mrs. M. What did you say of Beverley?

Capt. A. Oh, I was going to propose that you should tell her, by way of jest, that it was Beverley who was below—she'd come down fast enough then—ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. M. 'Twould be a trick she well deserves—besides, you know, the fellow tells her he'll get my consent to see her—ha! ha!—Let him, if he can, I say again.—Lydia, come down here! [*Calling.*] He'll make me a go-between in their interviews!—ha! ha! ha!—Come down, I say, Lydia!—I don't wonder at your laughing—ha! ha! ha! his impudence is truly ridiculous.

Capt. A. 'Tis very ridiculous, upon my soul, ma'am!—ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. M. The little hussy won't hear.—Well, I'll go and tell her at once who it is—she shall know that Captain Absolute is come to wait on her; and I'll make her behave as becomes a young woman.

Capt. A. As you please, ma'am.

Mrs. M. For the present, Captain, your servant—Ah, you've not done laughing yet, I see—elude my vigilance! yes, yes—Ha! ha! ha! [*Exit,* R.

Capt. A. Ha! ha! ha! one would think, now, that I might throw off all disguise at once, and seize my prize

with security; but such is Lydia's caprice, that, to undeceive, were probably to lose her. I'll see whether she knows me. [*Walks aside, surveying the Pictures.*

Enter Lydia, R.

Lyd. What a scene am I now to go through! surely nothing can be more dreadful than to be obliged to listen to the loathsome addresses of a stranger to one's heart.—I have heard of girls persecuted, as I am, who have appealed, in behalf of their favoured lover, to the generosity of his rival: suppose I were to try it—there stands the hated rival—an officer too!—but, oh, how unlike my Beverley! —I wonder he don't begin—truly, he seems a very negligent wooer!—quite at his ease, upon my word!—I'll speak first—Mr. Absolute!

Capt. A. Ma'am. [*Turns round.*

Lyd. Oh, heavens! Beverley!

Crpt. A. Hush!—hush, my life!—softly! be not surprised!

Lyd. I am so astonished! and so terrified! and so overjoyed!—for heaven's sake, how came you here?

Capt. A. Briefly—I have deceived your aunt—I was informed that my new rival was to visit here this evening, and, contriving to have him kept away, have passed myself on her for Captain Absolute.

Lyd. Oh, charming!—and she really takes you for young Absolute?

Capt. A. Oh, she's convinced of it.

Lyd. Ha! ha! ha! I can't forbear laughing, to think how her sagacity is over-reached.

Capt. A. But we trifle with our precious moments—such another opportunity may not occur—then let me now conjure my kind, my condescending angel, to fix the time when I may rescue her from undeserved persecution, and, with a licensed warmth, plead for my reward.

Lyd. Will you then, Beverley, consent to forfeit that portion of my paltry wealth?—that burden on the wings of love?

Capt. A. Oh, come to me—rich only thus—in loveliness! —Bring no portion to me but thy love—'twill be generous in you, Lydia—for well you know, it is the only dower your poor Beverley can repay.

Lyd. How persuasive are his words!—how charming will poverty be with him! [*Aside.*

Capt. A. By heavens, I would fling all goods of fortune from me with a prodigal hand, to enjoy the scene where I might clasp my Lydia to my bosom, and say, the world affords no smile to me but here. [*Embracing her.*]—If she holds out now, the devil is in it. [*Aside.*

Lyd. Now could I fly with him to the Antipodes—but my persecution is not yet come to a crisis. [*Aside.*

Enter Mrs. Malaprop, *listening*, R.

Mrs. M. I am impatient to know how the little hussy deports herself. [*Aside.*

Capt. A. So pensive, Lydia!—is then your warmth abated?

Mrs. M. Warmth abated?—so!—she has been in a passion, I suppose. [*Aside.*

Lyd. No, nor ever can, while I have life.

Mrs. M. An ill-tempered little devil!—she'll be in a passion all her life, will she? [*Aside.*

Lyd. Let her choice be Captain Absolute, but Beverley is mine.

Mrs. M. I am astonished at her assurance!—to his face—this to his face! [*Aside.*

Capt. A. Thus, then, let me enforce my suit. [*Kneeling.*

Mrs. M. Ay—poor young man!—down on his knees, entreating for pity!—I can contain no longer. [*Aside.*] —Why, thou vixen!—I have overheard you.

Capt. A. Oh, confound her vigilance! [*Aside.*

Mrs. M. Captain Absolute—I know not how to apologize for her shocking rudeness.

Capt. A. So—all's safe, I find. [*Aside.*]—I have hopes, madam, that time will bring the young lady—

Mrs. M. Oh, there's nothing to be hoped for from her! she's as headstrong as an allegory on the banks of Nile.

Lyd. Nay, madam, what do you charge me with now?

Mrs. M. Why, thou unblushing rebel—didn't you tell this gentleman to his face, that you loved another better?—didn't you say you never would be his?

Lyd. No, madam, I did not.

Mrs. M. Good heavens, what assurance!—Lydia, Lydia, you ought to know that lying don't become a young

woman! Didn't you boast that Beverley—that stroller, Beverley—possessed your heart?—Tell me that, I say!

Lyd. 'Tis true, ma'am, and none but Beverley—

Mrs. M. Hold!—hold, assurance!—you shall not be so rude.

Capt. A. Nay, pray, Mrs. Malaprop, don't stop the young lady's speech:—she's very welcome to talk thus—it does not hurt me in the least, I assure you.

Mrs. M. You are too good, captain—too amiably patient:—but come with me, miss—let us see you again soon, captain—remember what we have fixed.

Capt. A. I shall, ma'am.

Mrs. M. Come, take a graceful leave of the gentleman

Lyd. May every blessing wait on my Beverley, my loved Bever— [*Mrs. M. prevents her speaking.*

Mrs. M. Hussy!—Come along—come along.

[*Exeunt Capt. Absolute,* L., *kissing his hand to Lydia —Mrs. Malaprop and Lydia,* R.

Scene IV.—*Acres' Lodgings*

Acres *and* David *discovered; Acres just dressed.*

Acres. Indeed, David—dress does make a difference, David.

Dav. 'Tis all in all, I think—difference! why, an' you were to go now to Clod Hall, I am certain the old lady wouldn't know you: Master Butler wouldn't believe his own eyes, and Mrs. Pickle would cry, 'Lard presarve me!' our dairy maid would come giggling to the door, and I warrant Dolly Tester, your honour's favourite, would blush like my waistcoat—Oons! I'll wager a gallon, there an't a dog in the house but would bark, and I question whether Phillis would wag a hair of her tail!

Acres. Ay, David, there's nothing like polishing.

Dav. So I says of your honour's boots; but the boy never heeds me!

Acres. But, David, has Mr. De la Grace been here? I must rub up my balancing, and chasing, and boring.

Dav. I'll call again, sir. [*Crosses to* L.

Acres. Do—and see if there are any letters for me at the Post-office.

Dav. I will.—By the mass!—I can't help looking at

your head! if I hadn't been at the cooking, I wish I may die if should have known the dish again myself!

[*Exit.—Acres comes forward with a dancing step.*

Acres. Sink, slide—coupee.—Confound the first inventors of cotillions, say I!—they are as bad as algebra, to us country gentlemen—I can walk a minuet easy enough, when I am forced!—and I have been accounted a good stick in a country dance.—Odds jigs and tabors! I never valued your cross-over to couple—figure in—right and left—and I'd foot it with e'er a captain in the country!—but these outlandish heathen allemandes and cotillions are quite beyond me!—I shall never prosper at them, that's sure—mine are true-born English legs—they don't understand their cursed French lingo!—their *pas* this, and *pas* that, and *pas* t'other!—damn me! my feet don't like to be called paws!

Enter SERVANT, R.

Ser. Here is Sir Lucius O'Trigger to wait on you, sir.

Acres. Show him in. [*Exit Servant*, R.

Enter SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER, R.

Sir L. Mr. Acres, I am delighted to see you.

Acres. My dear Sir Lucius, I kiss your hands.

Sir L. Pray, my friend, what has brought you so suddenly to Bath?

Acres. 'Faith, I have followed Cupid's jack-a-lantern, and find myself in a quagmire at last!—In short, I have been very ill-used, Sir Lucius. I don't choose to mention names, but look on me as a very ill-used gentleman.

Sir L. Pray, what is the case?—I ask no names.

Acres. Mark me, Sir Lucius; I fall as deep as need be in love with a young lady—her friends take my part—I follow her to Bath—send word of my arrival; and receive answer, that the lady is to be otherwise disposed of. This, Sir Lucius, I call being ill-used.

Sir L. Very ill, upon my conscience!—Pray, can you divine the cause of it?

Acres. Why, there's the matter: she has another lover, one Beverley, who, I am told, is now in Bath.—Odds, slanders and lies! he must be at the bottom of it.

Sir L. A rival in the case, is there?—and you think he has supplanted you unfairly?

Acres. Unfairly! to be sure he has. He never could have done it fairly.

Sir L. Then sure you know what is to be done

Acres. Not I, upon my soul!

Sir L. We wear no swords here, but you understand me?

Acres. What! fight him!

Sir L. Ay, to be sure: what can I mean else?

Acres. But he has given me no provocation.

Sir L. Now, I think he has given you the greatest provocation in the world. Can a man commit a more heinous offence against another, than to fall in love with the same woman? Oh, by my soul, it is the most unpardonable breach of friendship.

Acres. Breach of friendship! Ay, ay; but I have no acquaintance with this man. I never saw him in my life.

Sir L. That's no argument at all—he has the less right, then, to take such a liberty.

Acres. 'Gad, that's true—I grow full of anger, Sir Lucius!—I fire apace; odds hilts and blades! I find a man may have a deal of valour in him, and not know it!—But couldn't I contrive to have a little right on my side?

Sir L. What the devil signifies right when your honour is concerned? do you think Achilles, or my little Alexander the Great, ever inquired where the right lay? No, by my soul, they drew their broad swords, and left the lazy sons of peace to settle the justice of it.

Acres. Your words are a grenadier's march to my heart! I believe courage must be catching!—I certainly do feel a kind of valour arising, as it were—a kind of courage, as I may say.—Odds flints, pans, and triggers! I'll challenge him directly.

Sir L. Ah, my little friend! if we had Blunderbuss Hall here—I could show you a range of ancestry, in the O'Trigger line, that would furnish the New Room, every one of whom had killed his man!—For though the mansion-house and dirty acres have slipped through my fingers, I thank heaven, our honour and the family pictures are as fresh as ever.

Acres. Oh, Sir Lucius, I have had ancestors too!—every man of them colonel or captain in the militia!—odds balls and barrels! say no more—I'm braced for it. The

thunder of your words has soured the milk of human kindness in my breast!—Zounds! as the man in the play says, 'I could do such deeds'—

Sir L. Come, come, there must be no passion at all in the case—these things should always be done civilly.

Acres. I must be in a passion, Sir Lucius—I must be in a rage—Dear Sir Lucius, let me be in a rage, if you love me.—Come, here's pen and paper. [*Sits.*] I would the ink were red!—Indite, I say, indite!—How shall I begin? Odds bullets and blades! I'll write a good bold hand, however.

Sir L. Pray, compose yourself. [*Sits down.*

Acres. Come—now, shall I begin with an oath? Do, Sir Lucius, let me begin with a damme?

Sir L. Pho! pho! do the thing decently, and like a Christian. Begin now—"Sir,"—

Acres. That's too civil, by half.

Sir L. "To prevent the confusion that might arise"—

Acres. Well—

Sir L. "From our both addressing the same lady"—

Acres. Ay—"both undressing the same lady"—there's the reason—"same lady"—Well—

Sir L. "I shall expect the honour of your company"—

Acres. Zounds! I'm not asking him to dinner!

Sir L. Pray, be easy.

Acres. Well, then, "honour of your company"—Does company begin with a C or a K?

Sir L. "To settle our pretensions"—

Acres. Well.

Sir L. Let me see—ay, King's Mead fields will do—"in King's Mead fields."

Acres. So, that's done—Well, I'll fold it up presently; my own crest, a hand and dagger, shall be the seal.

Sir L. You see, now, this little explanation will put a stop at once to all confusion or misunderstanding that might arise between you.

Acres. Ay, we fight to prevent any misunderstanding.

Sir L. Now, I'll leave you to fix your own time. Take my advice, and you'll decide it this evening, if you can; then, let the worst come of it, 'twill be off your mind to-morrow.

Acres. Very true.

Sir L. So I shall see nothing more of you, unless it be by letter, till the evening—I would do myself the honour to carry your message; but, to tell you a secret, I believe I shall have just such another affair on my own hands. There is a gay captain here who put a jest on me lately at the expense of my country, and I only want to fall in with the gentleman to call him out.

Acres. By my valour, I should like to see you fight first! Odds life, I should like to see you kill him, if it was only to get a little lesson!

Sir L. I shall be very proud of instructing you. Well, for the present—but remember now, when you meet your antagonist, do every thing in a mild and agreeable manner. Let your courage be as keen, but at the same time as polished as your sword.

[*Exeunt—Sir Lucius*, R., *Acres*, L.

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

Scene I.—*Acres' Lodgings.*

Acres *and* David *discovered.*

Dav. Then, by the mass, sir, I would do no such thing! ne'er a Sir Lucius O'Trigger in the kingdom should make me fight, when I wasn't so minded. Oons! what will the old lady say when she hears o't?

Acres. But my honour, David, my honour! I must be very careful of my honour.

Dav. Ay, by the mass, and I would be very careful of it; and I think, in return, my honour couldn't do less than to be very careful of me.

Acres. Odds blades! David, no gentleman will ever risk the loss of his honour!

Dav. I say, then, it would be but civil in honour never to risk the loss of a gentleman.—Lookye, master, this honour seems to me to be a marvellous false friend; ay, truly, a very courtier-like servant. Put the case, I was a gentleman (which, thank heaven, no one can say of me); well—my honour makes me quarrel with another gentle-

man of my acquaintance. So—we fight. (Pleasant enough that.) Boh! I kill him—(the more's my luck.) Now, pray, who gets the profit of it?—why, my honour. But, put the case that he kills me! by the mass! I go to the worms, and my honour whips over to my enemy.

Acres. No, David. In that case!—odds crowns and laurels! your honour follows you to the grave!

Dav. Now, that's just the place where I could make a shift to do without it.

Acres. Zounds! David, you are a coward!—It doesn't become my valour to listen to you.—What, shall I disgrace my ancestors!—Think of that, David—think what it would be to disgrace my ancestors!

Dav. Under favour, the surest way of not disgracing them, is to keep as long as you can out of their company. Look ye, now, master, to go to them in such haste—with an ounce of lead in your brains—I should think it might as well be let alone. Our ancestors are very good kind of folks; but they are the last people I should choose to have a visiting acquaintance with.

Acres. But, David, now, you don't think there is such very, very—great danger, hey?—Odds life! people often fight without any mischief done!

Dav. By the mass, I think 'tis ten to one against you! Oons! here to meet some lion-headed fellow, I warrant, with his damned double-barrelled swords, and cut-and-thrust pistols!—Lord bless us! it makes me tremble to think on't—those be such desperate bloody-minded weapons! Well, I never could abide them!—from a child I never could fancy them!—I suppose there an't been so merciless a beast in the world as your loaded pistol!

Acres. Zounds! I won't be afraid—odds fire and fury! you sha'nt make me afraid.—Here is the challenge, and I have sent for my dear friend, Jack Absolute, to carry it for me.

Dav. Ay, i'the name of mischief, let him be the messenger.—For my part, I wouldn't lend a hand to it, for the best horse in your stable. By the mass! it don't look like another letter!—it is, as I may say, a designing and malicious-looking letter!—and I warrant smells of gunpowder, like a soldier's pouch! Oons! I wouldn't swear it mayn't go off!

Acres. Out, you poltroon!—you ha'nt the valour of a grasshopper.

Dav. Well, I say no more—'twill be sad news, to be sure, at Clod-Hall!—but I ha' done.—How Phillis will howl when she hears of it!—ay, poor bitch, she little thinks what shooting her master's going after!—and I warrant old Crop, who has carried your honour, field and road, these ten years, will curse the hour he was born!—

[*Whimpering.*

Acres. It won't do, David—I am determined to fight, so get along, you coward, while I'm in the mind.

Enter Servant, r.

Ser. Captain Absolute, sir.

Acres. Oh! show him up. [*Exit Servant,* r.

Dav. Well, heaven send we be all alive this time to-morrow.

Acres. What's that?—Don't provoke me, David!

Dav. Good bye, master. [*Sobbing.*

Acres. Get along, you cowardly, dastardly, croaking raven. [*Exit David,* l.

Enter Captain Absolute, r.

Capt. A. What's the matter, Bob?

Acres. A vile, sheep-hearted blockhead!—If I hadn't the valour of St. George, and the dragon to boot—

Capt. A. But what did you want with me, Bob?

Acres. Oh!—there— [*Gives him the challenge.*

Capt. A. [*Reads*] "*To Ensign Beverley.*" So—what's going on now! [*Aside.*]—Well, what's this?

Acres. A challenge!

Capt. A. Indeed!—Why, you won't fight him, will you, Bob?

Acres. 'Egad, but I will, Jack.—Sir Lucius has wrought me to it. He has left me full of rage, and I'll fight this evening, that so much good passion mayn't be wasted.

Capt. A. But what have I to do with this?

Acres. Why, as I think you know something of this fellow, I want you to find him out for me, and give him this mortal defiance.

Capt. A. Well, give it me, and trust me he gets it.

Acres. Thank you, my dear friend, my dear Jack; but it is giving you a great deal of trouble.

Capt. A. Not in the least—I beg you won't mention it. No trouble in the world, I assure you.

Acres. You are very kind.—What it is to have a friend!—you couldn't be my second—could you, Jack?

Capt. A. Why, no, Bob—not in this affair—it would not be quite so proper.

Acres. Well, then, I must get my friend, Sir Lucius. I shall have your good wishes, however, Jack?

Capt. A. Whenever he meets you, believe me.

Enter Servant, R.

Ser. Sir Anthony Absolute is below, inquiring for the captain.

Capt. A. I'll come instantly. [*Exit Servant*, R.] Well, my little hero, success attend you. [*Going.*

Acres. Stay, stay, Jack.—If Beverley should ask you what kind of a man your friend Acres is, do tell him I am a devil of a fellow—will you, Jack?

Capt. A. To be sure, I shall. I'll say you are a determined dog—hey, Bob?

Acres. Ay, do, do—and if that frightens him, 'egad, perhaps he mayn't come. So tell him I generally kill a man a-week: will you, Jack?

Capt. A. I will; I will; I'll say you are called, in the country, "Fighting Bob."

Acres. Right, right—'tis all to prevent mischief: for I don't want to take his life, if I clear my honour.

Capt. A. No!—that's very kind of you.

Acres. Why, you don't wish me to kill him, do you, Jack?

Capt. A. No, upon my soul, I do not. But a devil of a fellow, hey? [*Going.*

Acres. True, true—But stay—stay, Jack—you may add, that you never saw me in such a rage before—a most devouring rage.

Capt. A. I will, I will.

Acres. Remember, Jack—a determined dog!

Capt. A. Ay, ay, "Fighting Bob."

[*Exeunt Acres*, L., *Captain Absolute*, R.

Scene II.—*Mrs. Malaprop's Lodgings.*

Enter Mrs. Malaprop *and* Lydia, r.

Mrs. M. Why, thou perverse one!—tell me what you can object to in him?—Isn't he a handsome man?—tell me that. A genteel man? a pretty figure of a man?

Lyd. She little thinks whom she is praising. [*Aside.*] So is Beverley, ma'am.

Mrs. M. No caparisons, miss, if you please. Caparisons don't become a young woman. No! Captain Absolute is indeed a fine gentleman.

Lyd. Ay, the Captain Absolute you have seen. [*Aside.*

Mrs. M. Then he's so well bred;—so full of alacrity and adulation!—He has so much to say for himself, in such good language, too. His physiognomy so grammatical; then his presence so noble! I protest, when I saw him, I thought of what Hamlet says in the play:—"Hesperian curls—the front of Job himself! an eye, like March, to threaten at command!—a station, like Harry Mercury, new"—Something about kissing—on a hill—however, the similitude struck me directly.

Lyd. How enraged she'll be presently, when she discovers her mistake! [*Aside.*

Enter Servant, l.

Serv. Sir Anthony and Captain Absolute are below, ma'am.

Mrs. M. Show them up here. [*Exit Servant*, l.] Now, Lydia, I insist on your behaving as becomes a young woman. Show your good breeding, at least, though you have forgot your duty.

Lyd. Madam, I have told you my resolution—I shall not only give him no encouragement, but I won't even speak to, or look at him. [*Flings herself into a chair, with her face from the door.*

Enter Sir Anthony *and* Captain Absolute, l.

Sir A. Here we are, Mrs. Malaprop; come to mitigate the frowns of unrelenting beauty,—and difficulty enough I had to bring this fellow. I don't know what's the mat-

ter, but if I had not held him by force, he'd have given me the slip.

Mrs. M. You have infinite trouble, Sir Anthony, in the affair. I am ashamed for the cause! Lydia, Lydia, rise, I beseech you!—pay your respects! [*Aside to her.*

Sir A. I hope, madam, that Miss Languish has reflected on the worth of this gentleman, and the regard due to her aunt's choice, and my alliance. Now, Jack, speak to her. [*Aside to him.*

Capt. A. What the devil shall I do? [*Aside.*]—You see, sir, she won't even look at me whilst you are here. I knew she wouldn't!—I told you so.—Let me entreat you, sir, to leave us together!

[*Captain A. seems to expostulate with his father.*

Sir A. I say, sir, I won't stir a foot yet.

Mrs. M. I am sorry to say, Sir Anthony, that my affluence over my niece is very small. Turn round, Lydia, I blush for you! [*Aside to her.*

Sir A. May I not flatter myself, that Miss Languish will assign what cause of dislike she can have to my son!—why don't you begin, Jack? Speak, you puppy,—speak! [*Aside to him.*

Mrs. M. It is impossible, Sir Anthony, she can have any. She will not say she has. Answer, hussy! why don't you answer? [*Aside to her.*

Sir A. Then, madam, I trust that a childish and hasty predilection will be no bar to Jack's happiness. Zounds! sirrah! why don't you speak? [*Aside to him.*

Capt. A. Hem! hem! Madam—hem! [*Captain Absolute attempts to speak, then returns to Sir Anthony.*] 'Faith! sir, I am so confounded!—and so—so confused! I told you I should be so, sir,—I know it. The—the tremour of my passion entirely takes away my presence of mind.

Sir A. But it don't take away your voice, fool, does it? Go up, and speak to her directly! [*Capt. A. makes signs to Mrs. Malaprop to leave them together.*]—[*Aside to him.*] What the devil are you at? unlock your jaws, sirrah, or—

Capt. A. [*Draws near Lydia.*] [*Aside.*] Now heaven send she may be too sullen to look round! I must disguise my voice.—[*Speaks in a low tone.*] Will not Miss Languish lend an ear to the mild accents of true love? Will not—

Sir A. What the devil ails the fellow? Why don't you speak out?—not stand croaking like a frog in a quinsey!

Capt. A. The—the—excess of my awe, and my—my modesty, quite choak me!

Sir A. Ah! your modesty again! I'll tell you what, Jack: if you don't speak out directly, and glibly, too, I shall be in such a rage! Mrs. Malaprop, I wish the lady would favour us with something more than a side-front.

[*Mrs. Malaprop seems to chide Lydia.*

Capt. A. So! all will out, I see! [*Goes up to Lydia, speaks softly.*] Be not surprised, my Lydia, suppress all surprise at present.

Lyd. [*Aside.*] Heavens! 'tis Beverley's voice!—[*Looks round by degrees, then starts up.*] Is this possible!—my Beverley! how can this be?—my Beverley!

Capt. A. Ah! 'tis all over! [*Aside.*

Sir A. Beverley!—the devil—Beverley! What can the girl mean? This is my son, Jack Absolute.

Mrs. M. For shame, hussy! for shame!—your head runs so on that fellow, that you have him always in your eyes! beg Captain Absolute's pardon, directly.

Lyd. I see no Captain Absolute, but my loved Beverley!

Sir A. Zounds, the girl's mad!—her brain's turned by reading!

Mrs. M. O' my conscience, I believe so!—what do you mean by Beverley, hussy?—you saw Captain Absolute before to-day, there he is: your husband that shall be.

Lyd. With all my soul, ma'am—when I refuse my Beverley—

Sir A. Oh! she's as mad as Bedlam!—or has this fellow been playing us a rogue's trick! Come here, sirrah, who the devil are you?

Capt. A. 'Faith, sir, I am not quite clear myself; but I'll endeavour to recollect.

Sir A. Are you my son, or not?—answer for your mother, you dog, if you won't for me.

Capt. A. Ye powers of impudence, befriend me!—[*Aside.*]—Sir Anthony, most assuredly I am your wife's son; and that I sincerely believe myself to be yours also, I hope my duty has always shown. Mrs. Malaprop, I am your most respectful admirer, and shall be proud to add

affectionate nephew. I need not tell my Lydia that she sees her faithful Beverley, who, knowing the singular generosity of her temper, assumed that name, and a station, which has proved a test of the most disinterested love, which he now hopes to enjoy, in a more elevated character.

Lyd. So!—there will be no elopement after all! [*Sullenly.*

Sir A. Upon my soul, Jack, thou art a very impudent fellow! To do you justice, I think I never saw a piece of more consummate assurance!

Capt. A. Oh, you flatter me, sir,—you compliment,—'tis my modesty you know, sir,—my modesty, that has stood in my way.

Sir A. Well, I am glad you are not the dull insensible varlet you pretend to be, however! I'm glad you have made a fool of your father, you dog—I am. So, this was your penitence, your duty, and obedience! I thought it was damn'd sudden. You never heard their names before, not you! What, the Languishes of Worcestershire, hey?—if you could please me in the affair, 'twas all you desired! Ah! you dissembling villain! What! [*Pointing to Lydia,*]—she squints, don't she? a little red-haired girl! hey? Why, you hypocritical young rascal—I wonder you a'n't ashamed to hold up your head!

Capt. A. 'Tis with difficulty, sir—I am confused—very much confused, as you must perceive.

Mrs. M. Oh, lud! Sir Anthony!—a new light breaks in upon me!—hey!—how! what! captain, did you write the letters, then? What!—am I to thank you for the elegant compilation of an "old weather-beaten she-dragon,"—hey? Oh, mercy!—was it you that reflected on my parts of speech?

Capt. A. Dear sir! my modesty will be overpowered at last, if you don't assist me. I shall certainly not be able to stand it.

Sir A. Come, come, Mrs. Malaprop, we must forget and forgive;—odds life! matters have taken so clever a turn all of a sudden, that I could find in my heart to be so good-humoured! and so gallant!—hey! Mrs. Malaprop! Come, we must leave them together, Mrs. Malaprop; they long to fly into each other's arms, I warrant! Jack—isn't

the cheek as I said, hey?—and the eye, you rogue!—and the lip—hey? Come, Mrs. Malaprop, we'll not disturb their tenderness—their's is the time of life for happiness!—[*Sings.*] *Youth's the season made for joy*—hey!—Odds life! I'm in such spirits—I don't know what I could not do! Permit me, ma'am—[*Gives his hand to Mrs. Malaprop.—Sings.*]—*Tol de rol*—'gad, I should like to have a little footing myself—*Tol de rol! de rol!*

[*Exit singing, and handing Mrs. Malaprop off,* R.—*Lydia sits sullenly in her Chair.*

Capt. A. So much thought bodes me no good. [*Aside.*]—So grave, Lydia!

Lyd. Sir!

Capt. A. So! 'egad! I thought as much!—that damned monosyllable has froze me! [*Aside.*]—What, Lydia, now that we are as happy in our friends' consent as in our mutual vows—

Lyd. Friends' consent, indeed! [*Peevishly.*

Capt. A. Come, come, we must lay aside some of our romance—a little wealth and comfort may be endured, after all. And for your fortune, the lawyers shall make such settlements as—

Lyd. Lawyers! I hate lawyers!

Capt. A. Nay, then, we will not wait for their lingering forms, but instantly procure the license, and—

Lyd. The license!—I hate licenses!

Capt. A. Oh, my love! be not so unkind!—thus let me entreat— [*Kneeling.*

Lyd. Pshaw! what signifies kneeling, when you know I must have you?

Capt. A. [*Rising.*] Nay, madam, there shall be no constraint upon your inclinations, I promise you.—If I have lost your heart—I resign the rest.—[*Aside.*] 'Gad, I must try what a little spirit will do!

Lyd. [*Rising.*] Then, sir, let me tell you, the interest you had there was acquired by a mean, unmanly imposition, and deserves the punishment of fraud.—What, you have been treating me like a child!—humouring my romance; and laughing, I suppose, at your success!

Capt. A. You wrong me, Lydia, you wrong me—only hear—

Lyd. So, while I fondly imagined we were deceiving

my relations, and flattered myself that I should outwit and incense them all—behold, my hopes are to be crushed at once, by my aunt's consent and approbation—and I am myself the only dupe at last! [*Walking about in a heat.*]—But here, sir, here is the picture—Beverley's picture! [*Taking a Miniature from her bosom*]—which I have worn, night and day, in spite of threats and entreaties!—There, sir, [*Flings it to him*]—and be assured, I throw the original from my heart as easily.

Capt. A. Nay, nay, ma'am, we will not differ as to that—here—[*Taking out a picture*]—here is Miss Lydia Languish.—What a difference!—ay, there is the heavenly assenting smile, that first gave soul and spirit to my hopes!—those are the lips which sealed a vow, as yet scarce dry in Cupid's calendar!—and there the half-resentful blush, that would have checked the ardour of my thanks. Well, all that's past; all over, indeed! There, madam, in beauty, that copy is not equal to you; but in my mind, its merit over the original, in being still the same, is such—that—I'll put it in my pocket. [*Puts it up again.*

Lyd. [*Softening.*] 'Tis your own doing, sir—I—I—I suppose you are perfectly satisfied.

Capt. A. Oh, most certainly—sure, now, this is much better than being in love!—ha! ha! ha!—there's some spirit in this! What signifies breaking some scores of solemn promises; all that's of no consequence, you know. To be sure, people will say, that Miss didn't know her own mind—but never mind that: or, perhaps, they may be ill-natured enough to hint, that the gentleman grew tired of the lady, and forsook her—but don't let that fret you.

Lyd. There's no bearing his insolence! [*Bursts into tears.*

Enter Mrs. Malaprop *and* Sir Anthony, R.

Mrs. M. [*Entering.*] Come, we must interrupt your billing and cooing awhile.

Lyd. This is worse than your treachery and deceit, you base ingrate! [*Sobbing.*

Sir A. What the devil's the matter now! Zounds! Mrs. Malaprop, this is the oddest billing and cooing I ever heard!—but what the deuce is the meaning of it? I'm quite astonished!

Capt. A. Ask the lady, sir.

Mrs M. Oh, mercy! I'm quite analyzed, for my part! —why, Lydia, what is the reason of this?

Lyd. Ask the gentleman, ma'am.

Sir A. Zounds! I shall be in a frenzy!—why, Jack, you are not come out to be any one else, are you?

Mrs. M. Ay, sir, there's no more trick, is there?—you are not, like Cerberus, three gentlemen at once, are you?

Capt. A. You'll not let me speak—I say the lady can account for this much better than I can.

Lyd. Ma'am, you once commanded me never to think of Beverley again—there is the man—I now obey you: for from this moment, I renounce him for ever. [*Exit*, R.

Mrs. M. Oh, mercy and miracles! what a turn here is! Why, sure, Captain, you haven't behaved disrespectfully to my niece?

Sir A. Ha! ha! ha!—ha! ha! ha!—now I see it—Ha! ha! ha!—now I see it—you have been too lively, Jack.

Capt. A. Nay, sir, upon my word—

Sir A. Come, no lying, Jack—I'm sure 'twas so. Come, no excuses, Jack; why, your father, you rogue, was so before you: the blood of the Absolutes was always impatient.

Capt. A. By all that's good, sir—

Sir A. Zounds! say no more, I tell you—Mrs. Malaprop shall make your peace. You must make his peace, Mrs. Malaprop; you must tell her, 'tis Jack's way—tell her, 'tis all our ways—it runs in the blood of our family! Come away, Jack, ha! ha! ha! Mrs. Malaprop—a young villain! [*Pushes him out*, L.

Mrs. M. Oh, Sir Anthony! Oh, fie, Captain!

[*Exeunt*, R.

Scene III.—*The North Parade.*

Enter Sir Lucius O'Trigger, R.

Sir L. I wonder where this Captain Absolute hides himself. Upon my conscience, these officers are always in one's way, in love affairs: I remember I might have married Lady Dorothy Carmine, if it had not been for a little rogue of a Major, who ran away with her before she could get a sight of me! And I wonder, too, what it is

the ladies can see in them to be so fond of them—unless it be a touch of the old serpent in them, that makes the little creatures be caught, like vipers, with a bit of red cloth. Hah! isn't this the Captain coming?—'faith, it is! There is a probability of succeeding about that fellow, that is mighty provoking! who the devil is he talking to?

[*Retires*, R.

Enter CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE, L.

Capt. A. To what fine purpose have I been plotting! a noble reward for all my schemes, upon my soul!—a little gipsy! I did not think her romance could have made her so damned absurd, either. 'Sdeath, I never was in a worse humour in my life! I could cut my own throat, or any other person's, with the greatest pleasure in the world!

Sir L. [*Aside.*] Oh, 'faith! I'm in the luck of it. I never could have found him in a sweeter temper for my purpose—to be sure, I'm just come in the nick! now to enter into conversation with him, and so quarrel genteelly. [*Advances to Captain Absolute.*]—With regard to that matter, Captain, I must beg leave to differ in opinion with you.

Capt. A. Upon my word, then, you must be a very subtle disputant: because, sir, I happened just then to be giving no opinion at all.

Sir L. That's no reason; for give me leave to tell you, a man may think an untruth as well as speak one.

Capt. A. Very true, sir; but if a man never utters his thoughts, I should think they might stand a chance of escaping controversy.

Sir L. Then, sir, you differ in opinion with me, which amounts to the same thing.

Capt. A. Hark ye, Sir Lucius: if I had not before known you to be a gentleman, upon my soul, I should not have discovered it at this interview; for, what you can drive at, unless you mean to quarrel with me, I cannot conceive!

Sir L. I humbly thank you, sir, for the quickness of your apprehension—[*Bowing*]—you have named the very thing I would be at.

Capt. A. Very well, sir—I shall certainly not baulk your inclinations—but I should be glad if you would please to explain your motives.

Sir L. Pray, sir, be easy—the quarrel is a very pretty quarrel, as it stands—we should only spoil it by trying to explain it. However, your memory is very short—or you could not have forgot an affront you passed on me within this week. So, no more, but name your time and place.

Capt. A. Well, sir, since you are so bent on it, the sooner the better; let it be this evening—here by the Spring Gardens. We shall scarcely be interrupted.

Sir L. 'Faith! that same interruption, in affairs of this nature, shows very great ill-breeding. I don't know what's the reason, but in England, if a thing of this kind gets wind, people make such a pother, that a gentleman can never fight in peace and quietness. However, if it's the same to you, Captain, I should take it as a particular kindness, if you'd let us meet in King's Mead fields, as a little business will call me there about six o'clock, and I may despatch both matters at once.

Capt. A. 'Tis the same to me exactly. A little after six, then, we will discuss this matter more seriously.

Sir L. If you please, sir; there will be very pretty small-sword light, though it won't do for a long shot. So that matter's settled! and my mind's at ease. [*Exit*, R.

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

Scene I.—*Julia's Dressing-Room.*

Enter Julia, R.

Jul. How this message has alarmed me! what dreadful accident can he mean? why such charge to be alone? Oh, Faulkland! how many unhappy moments, how many tears, you have cost me!

Enter Faulkland, L.

What means this? why this caution, Faulkland?

Faulk. Alas, Julia! I am come to take a long farewell!

Jul. Heavens! what do you mean?

Faulk. You see before you a wretch, whose life is forfeited:—Nay, start not; the infirmity of my temper has drawn all this misery on me: I left you fretful and passionate—an untoward accident drew me into a quarrel—the event is, that I must fly this kingdom instantly!—Oh, Julia, had I been so fortunate as to have called you mine entirely, before this mischance had fallen on me, I should not so deeply dread my banishment!

Jul. My soul is oppressed with sorrow at the nature of your misfortune: had these adverse circumstances arisen from a less fatal cause, I should have felt strong comfort in the thought, that I could now chase from your bosom every doubt of the warm sincerity of my love. My heart has long known no other guardian: I now entrust my person to your honour—we will fly together: when safe from pursuit, my father's will may be fulfilled, and I receive a legal claim to be the partner of your sorrows, and tenderest comforter.

Faulk. Oh, Julia! I am bankrupt in gratitude!—Would you not wish some hours to weigh the advantages you forego, and what little compensation poor Faulkland can make you, beside his solitary love?

Jul. I ask not a moment.—No, Faulkland, I have loved you for yourself: and if I now, more than ever, prize the solemn engagement which so long has pledged us to each other, it is because it leaves no room for hard aspersions on my fame, and puts the seal of duty to an act of love.—But let us not linger—perhaps this delay—

Faulk. 'Twill be better I should not venture out again till dark: yet am I grieved to think what numberless distresses will press heavy on your gentle disposition!

Jul. Perhaps your fortune may be forfeited by this unhappy act? I know not whether 'tis so, but sure that alone can never make us unhappy.—The little I have will be sufficient to support us, and exile never should be splendid.

Faulk. Ay, but in such an abject state of life, my wounded pride, perhaps, may increase the natural fretfulness of my temper, till I become a rude morose companion, beyond your patience to endure.

Jul. If your thoughts should assume so unhappy a bent,

you will the more want some mild and affectionate spirit to watch over and console you; one who, by bearing your infirmities with gentleness and resignation, may teach you so to bear the evils of your fortune.

Faulk. Julia, I have proved you to the quick! and with this useless device, I throw away all my doubts. How shall I plead to be forgiven this last unworthy effect of my restless, unsatisfied disposition?

Jul. Has no such disaster happened as you related?

Faulk. I am ashamed to own that it was all pretended. Let me to-morrow, in the face of heaven, receive my future guide and monitress, and expiate my past folly by years of tender adoration.

Jul. Hold, Faulkland! That you are free from a crime, which I before feared to name, Heaven knows how sincerely I rejoice! These are tears of thankfulness for that! But, that your cruel doubts should have urged you to an imposition that has wrung my heart, gives me now a pang more keen than I can express!

Faulk. By heavens! Julia—

Jul. Yet hear me.—My father loved you, Faulkland! and you preserved the life that tender parent gave me! in his presence I pledged my hand—joyfully pledged it, where before I had given my heart. When, soon after, I lost that parent, it seemed to me that Providence had, in Faulkland, shown me whither to transfer, without a pause, my grateful duty as well as my affection: hence I have been content to bear from you, what pride and delicacy would have forbid me from another. I will not upbraid you by repeating how you have trifled with my sincerity.

Faulk. I confess it all! yet hear—

Jul. After such a year of trial, I might have flattered myself that I should not have been insulted with a new probation of my sincerity, as cruel as unnecessary! I now see that it is not in your nature to be content, or confident in love. With this conviction, I never will be yours.

Faulk. Nay, but, Julia, by my soul and honour!—If, after this—

Jul. But one word more. As my faith has once been given to you, I will never barter it with another. I shall pray for your happiness with the truest sincerity; and the

dearest blessing I can ask of heaven to send you, will be to charm you from that unhappy temper which alone has prevented the performance of our solemn engagement. All I request of you is, that you will yourself reflect upon this infirmity; and, when you number up the many true delights it has deprived you of, let it not be your least regret, that it lost you the love of one who would have followed you in beggary through the world! [*Exit*, R.

Faulk. She's gone!—for ever!—There was an awful resolution in her manner, that rivetted me to my place. Oh, fool! dolt! barbarian! Cursed as I am, with more imperfections than my fellow wretches, kind fortune sent a heaven-gifted cherub to my aid, and, like a ruffian, I have driven her from my side! I must now hasten to my appointment. Well, my mind is turned for such a scene! I shall wish only to become a principal in it, and reverse the tale my cursed folly put me upon forging here. Oh, love! tormentor! fiend! whose influence, like the moon's, acting on men of dull souls, makes idiots of them, but meeting subtler spirits, betrays their course, and urges sensibility to madness! [*Exit*, L.

Enter Maid *and* Lydia, L.

Maid. My mistress, ma'am, I know, was here just now; perhaps she is only in the next room. [*Exit*, R.

Lyd. Heigho! Though he has used me so, this fellow runs strangely in my head. I believe one lecture from my grave cousin will make me recall him.

Enter Julia, R.

Oh, Julia, I am come to you with such an appetite for consolation! Lud, child! what's the matter with you? You have been crying!—I'll be hanged if that Faulkland has not been tormenting you!

Jul. You mistake the cause of my uneasiness: something has flurried me a little,—nothing that you can guess at.

Lyd. Ah! whatever vexations you may have, I can assure you mine surpass them. You know who Beverley proves to be?

Jul. I will now own to you, Lydia, that Mr. Faulkland had before informed me of the whole affair.

Lyd. So, then, I see I have been deceived by every one! but I don't care, I'll never have him.

Jul. Nay, Lydia—

Lyd. Why, is it not provoking, when I thought we were coming to the prettiest distress imaginable, to find myself made a mere Smithfield bargain of at last?—There had I projected one of the most sentimental elopements! so becoming a disguise!—so amiable a ladder of ropes!—conscious moon—four horses—Scotch parson—with such surprise to Mrs. Malaprop! and such paragraphs in the newspapers!—Oh, I shall die with disappointment!

Jul. I don't wonder at it.

Lyd. Now—sad reverse!—what have I to expect, but after a deal of flimsy preparation, with a bishop's license, and my aunt's blessing, to go simpering up to the altar! or, perhaps, be cried three times in a country church, and have an unmannerly fat clerk ask the consent of every butcher in the parish, to join John Absolute and Lydia Languish, spinster—Oh, that I should live to hear myself called spinster!

Jul. Melancholy, indeed!

Lyd. How mortifying, to remember the dear, delicious shifts I used to be put to, to gain half a minute's conversation with this fellow! How often have I stole forth in the coldest night in January, and found him in the garden, stuck like a dripping statue!—There would he kneel to me in the snow, and sneeze and cough so pathetically!—he shivering with cold, and I with apprehension!—and, while the freezing blast numbed our joints, how warmly would he press me to pity his flame, and glow with mutual ardour!—Ah, Julia, that was something like being in love!

Jul. If I were in spirits, Lydia, I could chide you only by laughing heartily at you; but it suits more the situation of my mind, at present, earnestly to entreat you, not to let a man, who loves you with sincerity, suffer that unhappiness from your caprice, which I know too well caprice can inflict. [*Mrs. Malaprop speaks within*, L.

Lyd. Oh, lud! what has brought my aunt here?

Enter Mrs. Malaprop *and* David, L.

Mrs. M. So! so! here's fine work! here's fine suicide,

parricide, and simulation, going on in the fields! and Sir Anthony not to be found to prevent the antistrophe!

Jul. For heaven's sake, madam, what's the matter?

Mrs. M. That gentleman can tell you, 'twas he enveloped the affair to me.

Lyd. Oh, patience!—Do, ma'am, for heaven's sake! tell us what is the matter!

Mrs. M. Why, murder's the matter! slaughter's the matter! killing's the matter! But he can tell you the perpendiculars. [*Pointing to David.*

Jul. Do speak, my friend. [*To David.*

Dav. Look ye, my lady—by the mass, there's mischief going on. Folks don't use to meet for amusement with fire arms, firelocks, fire engines, fire screens, fire office, and the devil knows what other crackers beside!—This, my lady, I say has an angry favour.

Jul. But who's engaged?

Dav. My poor master—under favour for mentioning him first. You know me, my lady—I am David—and my master, of course, is, or was, Squire Acres—and Captain Absolute. Then comes Squire Faulkland.

Jul. Do, ma'am, let us instantly endeavour to prevent mischief.

Mrs. M. Oh, fie! it would be very inelegant in us:—we should only participate things.

Lyd. Do, my dear aunt, let us hasten to prevent them.

Dav. Ah, do, Mrs. Aunt, save a few lives!—they are desperately given, believe me. Above all, there is that blood-thirsty Philistine, Sir Lucius O'Trigger.

Mrs. M. [*Aside.*] Sir Lucius O'Trigger! Oh, mercy! have they drawn poor little dear Sir Lucius into the scrape!—Why, how you stand, girl! you have no more feeling than one of the Derbyshire putrefactions!

Lyd. What are we to do, madam?

Mrs. M. Why, fly with the utmost felicity, to be sure, to prevent mischief!—Come, girls, this gentleman will exhort us. Come, sir, you're our envoy, lead the way, and we'll precede. You're sure you know the spot?

Dav. Oh, never fear! and one good thing is, we shall find it out by the report of the pistols.

All the Ladies. The pistols! Oh, let us fly!

[*Exeunt*, L.

Scene II.—*King's Mead Fields.*

Enter Sir Lucius *and* Acres, *with Pistols*, r. u. e.

Acres. By my valour, then, Sir Lucius, forty yards is a good distance. Odds levels and aims! I say it is a good distance.

Sir L. It is for muskets, or small field pieces; upon my conscience, Mr. Acres, you must leave these things to me. Stay now, I'll show you. [*Measures paces along the Stage.*] There, now, that is a very pretty distance—a pretty gentleman's distance.

Acres. Zounds! we might as well fight in a sentry-box! I tell you, Sir Lucius, the farther he is off the cooler I shall take my aim.

Sir L. Faith, then, I suppose you would aim at him best of all if he was out of sight!

Acres. No, Sir Lucius, but I should think forty, or eight and thirty yards—

Sir L. Pho! pho! nonsense! three or four feet between the mouths of your pistols is as good as a mile.

Acres. Odds bullets, no! by my valour, there is no merit in killing him so near! Do, my dear Sir Lucius, let me bring him down at a long shot: a long shot, Sir Lucius, if you love me.

Sir L. Well, the gentleman's friend and I must settle that. But tell me, now, Mr. Acres, in case of an accident, is there any little will or commission I could execute for you?

Acres. I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius, but I don't understand—

Sir L. Why, you may think there's no being shot at without a little risk—and, if an unlucky bullet should carry a quietus with it—I say, it will be no time then to be bothering you about family matters.

Acres. A quietus!

Sir L. For instance, now, if that should be the case—would you choose to be pickled, and sent home?—or would it be the same to you to lie here in the Abbey?—I'm told there is very snug lying in the Abbey.

Acres. Pickled!—Snug lying in the Abbey!—Odds tremours! Sir Lucius, don't talk so!

Sir L. I suppose, Mr. Acres, you never were engaged in an affair of this kind before.

Acres. No, Sir Lucius, never before.

Sir L. Ah, that's a pity—there's nothing like being used to a thing. Pray, now, how would you receive the gentleman's shot?

Acres. Odds files! I've practised that—there, Sir Lucius, there—[*Puts himself into an attitude*]—a side-front, hey?—Odd, I'll make myself small enough—I'll stand edgeways.

Sir L. Now, you're quite out—for if you stand so when I take my aim— [*Levelling at him.*

Acres. Zounds, Sir Lucius! are you sure it is not cocked?

Sir L. Never fear.

Acres. But—but—you don't know—it may go off of its own head!

Sir L. Pho! be easy. Well, now, if I hit you in the body, my bullet has a double chance; for if it misses a vital part on your right side, 'twill be very hard if it don't succeed on the left.

Acres. A vital part!

Sir L. But there—fix yourself so—[*Placing him*]—let him see the broadside of your full front—there—now a ball or two may pass clean through your body, and never do you any harm at all.

Acres. Clean through me! a ball or two clean through me!

Sir L. Ay, may they—and it is much the genteelest attitude into the bargain.

Acres. Look ye, Sir Lucius—I'd just as lieve be shot in an awkward posture as a genteel one—so, by my valour! I will stand edgeways.

Sir L. [*Looking at his watch.*] Sure they don't mean to disappoint us—hah! no, faith—I think I see them coming.

Acres. Hey!—what!—coming!

Sir L. Ay, who are those yonder, getting over the stile?

Acres. There are two of them indeed!—well, let them come—hey, Sir Lucius!—we—we—we—we—won't run

Sir L. Run!

Acres. No, I say—we won't run, by my valour!

Sir L. What the devil's the matter with you?

Acres. Nothing, nothing, my dear friend—my dear Sir Lucius—but I—I—I don't feel quite so bold, somehow, as I did.

Sir L. Oh, fie! consider your honour.

Acres. Ay, true—my honour—do, Sir Lucius, edge in a word or two, every now and then, about my honour.

Sir L. Well, here they're coming. [*Looking.*

Acres. Sir Lucius, if I wasn't with you, I should almost think I was afraid—if my valour should leave me! valour will come and go.

Sir L. Then, pray, keep it fast while you have it.

Acres. Sir Lucius—I doubt it is going—yes, my valour is certainly going! it is sneaking off!—I feel it oozing out, as it were, at the palms of my hands!

Sir L. Your honour—your honour!—Here they are.

Acres. Oh, that I was safe at Clod Hall! or could be shot before I was aware!

Enter Faulkland *and* Captain Absolute, R. U. E.

Sir L. Gentlemen, your most obedient—hah!—what, Captain Absolute! So, I suppose, sir, you are come here, just like myself—to do a kind office, first for your friend—then to proceed to business on your own account?

Acres. What Jack!—my dear Jack!—my dear friend!

Capt. A. Harkye, Bob, Beverley's at hand.

Sir L. Well, Mr. Acres—I don't blame your saluting the gentleman civilly. So, Mr. Beverley [*To Faulkland*], if you choose your weapons, the captain and I will measure the ground.

Faulk. My weapons, sir!

Acres. Odds life! Sir Lucius, I'm not going to fight Mr. Faulkland; these are my particular friends!

Sir L. What, sir, did not you come here to fight Mr. Acres?

Faulk. Not I, upon my word, sir!

Sir L. Well, now, that's mighty provoking! But I hope, Mr. Faulkland, as there are three of us come on purpose for the game—you won't be so cantankerous as to spoil the party, by sitting out.

Capt. A. Oh, pray, Faulkland, fight to oblige Sir Lucius.

Faulk. Nay, if Mr. Acres is so bent on the matter—

Acres. No, no, Mr, Faulkland—I'll bear my disappointment like a Christian.—Lookye, Sir Lucius, there's no occasion at all for me to fight; and if it is the same to you, I'd as lieve let it alone.

Sir L. Observe me, Mr. Acres—I must not be trifled with! You have certainly challenged somebody, and you came here to fight him. Now, if that gentleman is willing to represent him—I can't see, for my soul, why it isn't just the same thing.

Acres. Why, no, Sir Lucius: I tell you, 'tis one Beverley I've challenged—a fellow, you see, that dare not show his face. If he were here, I'd make him give up his pretensions directly.

Capt. A. Hold, Bob—let me set you right—there is no such man as Beverley in the case. The person who assumed that name is before you; and as his pretensions are the same in both characters, he is ready to support them in whatever way you please.

Sir L. Well, this is lucky. Now you have an opportu nity—

Acres. What, quarrel with my dear friend, Jack Absolute!—not if he were fifty Beverleys! Zounds! Sir Lucius, you would not have me so unnatural!

Sir L. Upon my conscience, Mr. Acres, your valour has oozed away with a vengeance!

Acres. Not in the least! odds backs and abettors! I'll be your second with all my heart—and if you should get a quietus, you may command me entirely. I'll get you snug lying in the Abbey here; or pickle you, and send you over to Blunderbuss Hall, or any thing of the kind, with the greatest pleasure.

Sir L. Pho! pho! you are little better than a coward.

Acres. Mind, gentlemen, he calls me a coward: coward was the word, by my valour!

Sir L. Well, sir?

Acres. Lookye, Sir Lucius, 'tisn't that I mind the word coward—Coward may be said in a joke—But if you had called me a poltroon, odds daggers and balls!—

Sir L. Well, sir?

Acres. I should have thought you a very ill-bred man.

Sir L. Pho! you are beneath my notice.

Capt. A. Nay, Sir Lucius, you can't have a better second than my friend Acres. He is a most determined dog—called in the country, fighting Bob. He generally kills a man a week—don't you, Bob?

Sir L. Well, then, captain, 'tis we must begin—so come out, my little counsellor, [*Draws his sword,*] and ask the gentleman, whether he will resign the lady without forcing you to proceed against him.

Capt. A. Come on then, sir, [*Draws,*] since you won't let it be an amicable suit, here's my reply.

Enter Sir Anthony, David, *and the* Ladies, L. U. E.

Dav. Knock 'em all down, sweet Sir Anthony; knock down my master in particular—and bind his hands over to their good behaviour!

Sir A. Put up, Jack, put up, or I shall be in a frenzy—how came you in a duel, sir?

Capt. A. 'Faith, sir, that gentleman can tell you better than I; 'twas he called on me, and you know, sir, I serve his majesty.

Sir A. Here's a pretty fellow! I catch him going to cut a man's throat, and he tells me he serves his majesty! Zounds! sirrah, then how durst you draw the king's sword against one of his subjects?

Capt. A. Sir, I tell you, that gentleman called me out, without explaining his reasons.

Sir A. 'Gad, sir! how came you to call my son out, without explaining your reasons?

Sir L. Your son, sir, insulted me in a manner which my honour could not brook.

Sir A. Zounds, Jack! how durst you insult the gentleman in a manner which his honour could not brook?

Mrs. M. Come, come, let's have no honour before ladies—Captain Absolute, come here—How could you intimidate us so? Here's Lydia has been terrified to death for you.

Capt. A. For fear I should be killed, or escape, ma'am?

Mrs. M. Nay, no delusions to the past—Lydia is convinced: speak, child.

Sir L. With your leave, ma'am, I must put in a word here. I believe I could interpret the young lady's silence. Now mark—

Lyd. What is it you mean, sir?

Sir L. Come, come, Dalia, we must be serious now; this is no time for trifling.

Lyd. 'Tis true, sir; and your reproof bids me offer this gentleman my hand, and solicit the return of his affections.

Capt. A. Oh, my little angel, say you so? Sir Lucius, I perceive there must be some mistake here. With regard to the affront which you affirm I have given you, I can only say that it could not have been intentional. And as you must be convinced, that I should not fear to support a real injury—you shall now see that I am not ashamed to atone for an inadvertency—I ask your pardon. But for this lady, while honoured with her approbation, I will support my claim against any man whatever.

Sir A. Well said, Jack, and I'll stand by you, my boy.

Acres. Mind, I give up all my claim—I make no pretensions to any thing in the world; and if I can't get a wife without fighting for her, by my valour! I'll live a bachelor.

Sir L. Captain, give me your hand—an affront, handsomely acknowledged, becomes an obligation; and as for the lady, if she chooses to deny her own hand-writing here— [*Takes out Letters.*

Mrs. M. Oh, he will dissolve my mystery! Sir Lucius, perhaps there is some mistake. Perhaps I can illuminate—

Sir L. Pray, old gentlewoman, don't interfere where you have no business. Miss Languish, are you my Dalia, or not?

Lyd. Indeed, Sir Lucius, I am not!

[*Lydia and Absolute walk aside.*

Mrs. M. Sir Lucius O'Trigger—ungrateful as you are—I own the soft impeachment—pardon my camelion blushes, I am Delia.

Sir L. You Dalia!—pho! pho! be asy!

Mrs. M. Why, thou barbarous Vandyke—those letters are mine. When you are more sensible of my benignity, perhaps I may be brought to encourage your addresses.

Sir L. Mrs. Malaprop, I am extremely sensible of your condescension; and whether you or Lucy have put this trick upon me, I am equally beholden to you. And to

show you I am not ungrateful, Captain Absolute, since you have taken that lady from me, I'll give you my Dalia into the bargain.

Capt. A. I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius; but here's my friend, fighting Bob, unprovided for.

Sir L. Hah! little valour—here, will you make your fortune?

Acres. Odds wrinkles! No.—But give me your hand, Sir Lucius, forget and forgive; but if ever I give you a chance of pickling me again, say Bob Acres is a dunce. that's all.

Sir A. Come, Mrs. Malaprop, don't be cast down—you are in your bloom yet.

Mrs. M. Oh, Sir Anthony! men are all barbarians!

[*All retire but Julia and Faulkland.*

Jul. He seems dejected and unhappy—not sullen:—there was some foundation, however, for the tale he told me—Oh, woman! how true should be your judgment. when your resolution is so weak!

Faulk. Julia!—how can I sue for what I so little deserve? I dare not presume—yet hope is the child of penitence.

Jul. Oh! Faulkland, you have not been more faulty in your unkind treatment of me, than I am now in wanting inclination to resent it. As my heart honestly bids me place my weakness to the account of love, I should be ungenerous not to admit the same plea for yours.

[*Sir Anthony comes forward between them.*

Faulk. Now I shall be blest, indeed.

Sir A. What's going on here?—So, you have been quarrelling too, I warrant.—Come, Julia, I never interfered before; but let me have a hand in the matter at last.—All the faults I have ever seen in my friend Faulkland, seemed to proceed from what he calls the delicacy and warmth of his affection for you.—There, marry him directly, Julia, you'll find he'll mend surprisingly.

[*The rest of the characters come forward.*

Sir L. Come, now, I hope there is no dissatisfied person but what is content; for as I have been disappointed myself, it will be very hard if I have not the satisfaction of seeing other people succeed better—

Acres. You are right, Sir Lucius—So, Jack, I wish you

joy.—Mr. Faulkland, the same.—Ladies,—come, now, to show you I'm neither vexed nor angry, odds tabors and pipes! I'll order the fiddles in half an hour to the New Rooms—and I insist on your all meeting me there.

Sir A. 'Gad, sir, I like your spirit! and at night we single lads will drink a health to the young couples, and a good husband to Mrs. Malaprop.

Faulk. Our partners are stolen from us, Jack—I hope to be congratulated by each other—yours for having checked in time the errors of an ill-directed imagination, which might have betrayed an innocent heart; and mine for having, by her gentleness and candour, reformed the unhappy temper of one, who by it made wretched whom he loved most, and tortured the heart he ought to have adored.

Capt. A. True, Faulkland, we have both tasted the bitters, as well as the sweets of love—with this difference only, that you always prepared the bitter cup for yourself, while I—

Lyd. Was always obliged to me for it, hey? Mr. Modesty!—But come, no more of that—our happiness is now as unalloyed as general.

Jul. Then let us study to preserve it so; and while hope pictures to us a flattering scene of future bliss, let us deny its pencil those colours which are too bright to be lasting.—When hearts deserving happiness would unite their fortunes, virtue would crown them with an unfading garland of modest, hurtless flowers; but ill-judging passion will force the gaudier rose into the wreath, whose thorn offends them when its leaves are dropped!

THE END.

No. XXXII.

MODERN STANDARD DRAMA.

EDITED BY EPES SARGENT,

AUTHOR OF "VELASCO, A TRAGEDY," &c.

PERFECTION:

OR,

THE MAID OF MUNSTER.

A Farce

IN ONE ACT.

BY THOMAS HAYNES BAYLY.

WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS, CAST OF CHARACTERS, COSTUMES, RELATIVE POSITIONS, &c.

NEW YORK:

WM. TAYLOR & CO., No. 2 ASTOR HOUSE,

AND JARVIS BUILDINGS, NORTH ST., BALTIMORE.

BOSTON: REDDING AND CO.—PHILADELPHIA: ZIEBER AND CO., AND S. G. SHERMAN.—PITTSBURGH: J. W. COOK.—CHARLESTON: AMOS HEAD.—CINCINNATI: ROBINSON AND JONES.—MOBILE: M. BOULLEMET.—LOUISVILLE: J. H. PENTON.—NEW ORLEANS: J. C. MORGAN, AND JOHN SLY.

PRICE 12 1-2 CENTS.

MODERN STANDARD DRAMA

EDITED BY LUDIE MARSHEY.

PERFECTION.

EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION.

This sparkling little afterpiece, so familiar to all play-goers, was originally produced at Drury Lane Theatre the 25th of March, 1830. Mr. Jones as *Charles Paragon*, and Madame Vestris as *Kate O'Brien*, sustained the two principal parts with great vivacity and ability; and a degree of success rarely bestowed on such dramatic trifles, has up to this time attended the piece. It is founded on a tale, which appeared in one of the "Annuals"; and the lively, drawing-room air, which pervades it, has been one great element of its exceeding popularity. It is not only one of the standing dishes at all our theatres, but is quite a favourite among those venturous young gentlemen and ladies, who mingle in private theatricals.

Thomas Haynes Bayly, the author of this and several other successful afterpieces, died at Cheltenham, England, the 22d of April, 1839. He was well known as one of the most graceful lyric poets of the age; and his songs have been deservedly popular. We need but enumerate "The Pilot," "She Wore a Wreath of Roses," "The Soldier's Tear," and "Oh, no! we never mention her," to prove that few modern ballad-writers have produced so many lyrics that are widely and well remembered.

In a notice of the death of this accomplished writer, the London Literary Gazette communicates the following facts respecting him:—"Mr. Bayly has been, we fear, another example of the sad and unfortunate lot of literary men. Born to good expectations, and married to a beautiful and accomplished woman, who brought him a considerable fortune, he began the world under the most favourable auspices, and mixed with the best society of the day. His expectations were, however, disappoint-

ed; and he could not fall back into a sufficiently economical course, till the pressure of circumstances impoverished him beyond a remedy. For it is difficult, if not impossible, for a person so situated to disentangle himself, and again enjoy a fair field for the exercise of his abilities. In England, poverty is the worst of crimes; and punished more unrelentingly than the deepest guilt. So did Mr. Bayly find it. Demand would not wait for the fruits of exertion; and no sooner was his head raised above the stormy waters to breathe for awhile, than it was ruthlessly plunged down again, and he was doomed to perish, as we have said, another sad instance of the miserable fate of genius when once involved in pecuniary embarrassments. Mr. Bayly, besides his many beautiful songs, has written, we believe, thirty or forty pieces for the stage; and from these a comfortable provision might have been drawn. But, alas for the author in want! He must sell for what he can get, to supply immediate necessities; and sacrifice his birthright indeed for a mess of pottage!

"The public go nightly to theatres to laugh at 'Tom Noddy's Secret,' or see 'Perfection,' or witness other popular productions; the drawing-room resounds with the touching melody of 'Oh, no, we never mention her!' or the playful strains of 'I'd be a butterfly,'—whilst the writer is pining in sickness and distress, dying oppressed and unpitied. It is a thoughtless, a heartless, and a gloomy picture; but so it is, and rare is the occasion when struggling talent is taken by the hand, and lifted above the wrongs of life, or even allowed to lift itself. The avenger is quick, the saviour slow; until, as here, an early death releases the victim, and he sinks into that grave where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

"Mr. Bayly has left a widow and two children to bewail his premature loss."

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

	Drury Lane, 1830.	*Park*, 1846.	*Boston*, 1846.
Sir Lawrence Paragon	Mr. Jas. Brown.	Mr. Bass.	Mr. Gilbert.
Charles Paragon.....	" Jones.	" Dyott.	" G. H. Barrett
Sam (valet to Charles)	" Webster.	" A. Andrews.	" T. Placide.
Footman.....		" Milot.	" Adams.
Kate O'Brien	Madame Vestris.	Mrs. Chas. Kean.	Mrs. Bland.
Susan (her maid)	Mrs. Orger.	Mrs. Dyott.	Mrs. W. H. Smith

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EXITS AND ENTRANCES.

R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; R. D. *Right Door*; L. D. *Left Door*; S. E. *Second Entrance*; U. E. *Upper Entrance*; M. D. *Middle Door*.

RELATIVE POSITIONS.

R., means *Right*; L., *Left*; C., *Centre*; R. C., *Right of Centre*; L. C., *Left of Centre*.

N.B. Passages marked with Inverted Commas, *are usually omitted in the representation.*

PERFECTION.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in Kate O'Brien's House.*

Enter SIR LAWRENCE *and* SUSAN, R.

Sus. THIS way, Sir Lawrence; my mistress will be delighted to see you. Law, sir—you're looking better than ever, I protest.

Sir L. No, Susan, no—that won't do—better, perhaps, than when you saw me last, for I was then in a hobble with the gout; but as for "better than ever," oh! Susan, you wouldn't say so, if you could have seen me five-and-twenty years ago. I certainly was a fine grown young man—*was*, how I hate the word!

"*Sus.* You're not married yet, Sir Lawrence; more's "the wonder, as I say to mistress; and more's the pity, as I "say to myself. That comes of being such a fine grown "young man, you never could meet with your match. "You'll excuse my freedom, sir, but you know Miss Kate "and I were playfellows together, and she has quite spoil-"ed me."

"*Sir L.* It's my opinion, you'd take a great deal of "spoiling: you're a very fine young woman, Susan, *I* "say so—*I*, that am a judge, that is to say—*have* been a "judge. What have I to do with fine women now?"

Sus. What a pity it is, sir, that you are an old bachelor —I mean a single man.

Sir L. Oh! out with it—an old bachelor! there's a nick-name to break a man's heart with—old Nick's own

invention! But I've borne it for many a long year, and it's now too late to think of getting rid of it. Oh, if I had but married Laura Pennington!

Sus. Ah, sir! why didn't you do it, sir?

Sir L. Why Susan, the fact is—she was rather too short—not much—just a degree under my own standard; a sweet creature, though, and there was no other fault to find with her—possibly I was wrong. But then there was Araminta Skinner.

Sus. And pray, sir, what forbid the banns in that instance?

Sir L. I did, Susan: I managed to break off before I committed myself. I think she was growing partial to me; most young women did in those days; but all of a sudden it struck me, that she was a *little* too short, not much, but about an inch below my idea of *perfection*. Then there was Maria, sweet Maria.

Sus. Well, sir, and why didn't you make her Lady Paragon?

Sir L. She was just a shade too brown; afterwards I thought I should have married Louisa.

Sus. Well, what was her fault?

Sir L. She was just an atom too fair; then Fanny was too fat, and Theodosia was too thin, and somehow or other, in every girl I met, there was a something—

Sus. Not good enough for such a fine grown young man.

Sir L. Oh, Susan! don't banter me; 'tis no laughing matter; they have all got husbands, and *olive branches*, and all that sort of thing, now, and I am a fusty old bachelor! Perhaps it is not too late to mend, either—is it, Susan? hey, what say you? I always admired you vastly!

Sus. Ay, now 'tis your turn to banter; but if you were in earnest, before our wedding-day came, you'd find me *too this, or too that, or too t'other*.

Sir L. No! upon my life, that's all gone by.

Sus. Indeed! then, perhaps, I might find the objection myself; I'm too—

Sir L. Too, what?

Sus. Too *young!* don't be angry, I'll send my mistress to you, sir—bring your nephew and your ward together,

if you can; I fear it's too late for you to think of matrimony. "If you will not when you may,"—you know the proverb—young bachelors, who are too hard to be pleased, must make the best of a life of single blessedness. [*Exit*, R.

Sir L. Oh! that's very true; but, confound it, there's no such thing as single blessedness; blessedness always comes double. Well, after all, if I can but bring about a match between my ward and nephew, it will be a consolation to me: they have never met, and I begin to fear he's as particular as I used to be. But if Kate O'Brien does not charm him, he must be difficult to please indeed. [*Kate sings without.*] Eh! that is her glorious voice.

Enter Kate, R.

My fair ward, welcome.

Kate. And welcome a thousand times, my dear old guardian; why, you look—

Sir L. Oh, don't talk about my looks; it's a sore subject; fiction can no longer impose me, and that's the devil! I look like a fusty old bachelor, and that's the fact—I wish it wasn't—but you look charmingly: why, we haven't met these two years; what a catalogue of conquests you must have to give me—but no *engagement*, I hope?

Kate. Why, in affairs of war, the engagement comes before the conquest, does it not?

Sir L. That may be, madcap! but in affairs of love, those eyes of yours vanquish, and then the engagement begins. But you are not engaged, I hope?

Kate. Indeed I am not; I am as free as air, and am likely to continue so. But why are you so anxious about the matter?—I thought you wished me to marry?

Sir L. So I do—I want you to marry a man you have never seen.

Kate. I thank you kindly, sir, but I would much rather look before I leap.

Sir L. So you shall look; and, after looking, if you will take the leap, old as I am, I shall jump for joy.

Kate. Well, sir, and pray where is the happy man, who is to make me the happy woman?

Sir L. He is at my house; he is my nephew—just like me, that is, just like what I *was* at his age.

Kate. Irresistible, then, of course; and is he as particular as you are reported to have been?

Sir L. Why, to say the truth, I am afraid he is—but that does not signify, for the more fastidious he is, the more will he appreciate your perfection. Had I met with any body like you in my *younger* days—

Kate. Oh, say no more, I guess the rest.

Sir L. My dear, I beg your pardon. I think I feel a draught; are you sure that door is shut?

Kate. I hear, sir—[*Runs to the door.*]—quite.

Sir L. Bless your heart, how sensible you are—but is there not a nasty whistling wind through that key-hole?

Kate. Oh! if you had but married your first love, you never would have thought of that.

Sir L. Old bachelor's whims and fancies, hey? no matter, listed doors and sand-bagged windows are great comforts, notwithstanding. But we were talking of my nephew; when he marries, he says he must and will marry perfection.

Kate. Does he indeed? meaning, no doubt, that naught but perfection can pretend to match with him: well done, vanity!

Sir L. Don't blame the lad; I was just the same at his age.

Kate. And you have reaped the advantages of it—well, do you know I am just as particular as your nephew? I never mean to marry till I meet with—

Sir L. Perfection! hey?

Kate. No, Sir Lawrence, one peep will not do—I would rather he disliked me at the first peep, and loved me afterwards, than that he should be over head and ears in love with me at the first view, and I scarcely ancle deep, when I became his wife.

Sir L. This is all nonsense. I will send him to you, and I have no fears about the result; *in you* he will find the wife he wants, (that is) perfection. Good-bye, Kate; I'll bring him to you this very day. [*Exit*, L.

Kate. Perfection, forsooth! well, I admire the man's vanity. To be trotted out like a steed for sale, and, if not deemed satisfactory, to be trotted in again. No, no! Kate O'Brien has too much spirit for that. They say I shall never marry; and if to all who pop questions, I continue

answering with that chilling monosyllable *no*, perchance I never may—well—

[*Song.*] "I'll not believe it." [*Exit*, R.

Scene II.—*An Apartment at Sir Lawrence Paragon's.*

Charles *reading* L. *of table*, Sam *busying himself at table.*

Chas. Well! what are you fidgeting about?—do be quiet.

Sam. I'm putting to rights, sir. What a kind-hearted gentleman your uncle is—but quite thrown away, if I may presume to say such a thing. If he hadn't been an old bachelor, he'd have been the snuggest elderly person I ever saw. Let it be a warning to you, sir, if I may be so bold; you've missed your opportunities before now, you know, and you may do that once too often.

Chas. Well, upon my word, free and easy.

Sam. Why, I didn't serve you at Oxford, without knowing how to claim my privilege for old acquaintance. Do get a wife.

Chas. Hold your tongue, Sam. I never saw the woman yet, that I could conscientiously throw myself away upon.

Sam. If you please to give me leave, sir, I mean to alter my condition, as soon as I meet a genteel, comely body.

Chas. With all my heart: marry a plain cook, if you like.

Sam. No: a pretty ladies' maid—I can't help taking warning of your uncle—I'll marry forthwith.

Chas. When you do, you'll please to take warning of *me*, and find another place; I'll have no encumbrance, no *soothing solace*, no *babes*, no *sucklings*, on my establishment; so, when you begin paying your addresses, I'll pay you your wages—and when you mean to be any woman's humble servant, please to remember you are no servant of mine.

Sam. Well, now, really, sir, that is very hard; what objection can you have to the hymeneal altar? yet I can't help thinking that you'll marry one of these days, notwithstanding.

Chas. When I *am*, you'll find my wife a perfect wo-

man; and as that is a sight we are none of us likely to meet with, why, the probability is—that you'll go to the grave without seeing my wife. But having given you my opinion of your own matrimonial plans, you'll please to leave me to my fate; and moreover, as I see my uncle coming this way, you will do me the favour of leaving the room.

Sam. By all means, sir.—[*Aside.*] I see, my union, whenever I do make a selection, must be *clandecent*, for he'll never give me a special license: but I'll be churched in spite of him. [*Exit*, L.

Enter Sir Lawrence Paragon, L.

Sir L. I'm sure it is an east wind, for I have a pain in my right shoulder, just like that I had in my left, in my last rheumatism but one. Bless me, Charles, what a habit you have, of not wiping your feet at the street door—the stair carpets are all of a mess.

Chas. Bless me, uncle, I beg your pardon—I have not been accustomed to a bachelor's house.

Sir L. Ay, Charles, that is it; you mean, you never were privy to an old bachelor's peculiarities: look to yourself, then, and take care; take warning of me. That ever I should live to be a scare-crow!

Chas. They tell me, sir, that you were very like what I now am.

Sir L. Umph! there is a resemblance indeed; but you have not got quite the dimple I had in my chin. Oh! you need not look for it now, you'll see a wrinkle instead; but take warning, I say—have you thought of our late conversation?

Chas. Sir Lawrence, my dear uncle; almost anything I would willingly do to oblige you—but matrimony, no—there I must be obstinate.

Sir L. And why, pray, why?

Chas. Oh! I adore the sex; yes, *collectively*, they are my idols; but to one individual of woman kind, never will I bend the knee.

Sir L. That's all stuff; very proper rattle for a boy in his teens; but five-and-twenty ought to be above it. Situated as you are, Charles, it is your duty to marry.

Chas. Ah, sir—duty!—prove that it can be my pleasure, and I shall obey. But why is it my duty?

Sir L. Answer me—are not you my poor, dear, dead brother's only son?

Chas. There's no denying that, uncle.

Sir L. Well, and I having no children of my own, are you not heir to my estate and property?

Chas. Such is at present the fact, sir; but why force a pill down my throat, which *you* could never be induced to swallow—why don't you marry? why don't you hand down both name and fortune in the direct line?

Sir L. Oh, nonsense! I'm too old to marry.

Chas. Not at all; you are very hale—

Sir L. Hale! yes—I hate the word—when you say a man's hale, you only mean he totters on tolerably, considering his age: no man tells another under sixty, he's *hale*—hale's a very wintry expression. I wish I had married forty years ago—yes, the younger the better; don't you wait too long; I repeat, it is your duty to marry.

Chas. So I have been told ever since I was nineteen; and, I suppose, that is the reason I have never chosen a wife. Had I been the youngest son of a younger brother, with nothing but a curacy, or a cornet's commission, I dare say I should have been warned against matrimony, and should have run away with an apothecary's daughter, and have been the happy father of *ten little blooming nudities.*

Sir L. Well, Charles, you certainly ought to know best; I dare say you are as obstinate and as headstrong as myself; and I hate obstinacy as I hate—

Chas. Undutiful nephews.

Sir L. No, Charles, you are not undutiful—at least, only on this occasion; and as to hating you, that is impossible.

Chas. Thank you, uncle; and now, for once, I will confess that I am not so obstinate as you seem to imagine. I have really no very decided objection to matrimony.

Sir L. Then, why on earth don't you look about you?

Chas. I do, positively, uncle; I *have* looked, and *am* looking, and *shall* or *will* look. But when I marry, my choice will not be on an every-day woman—my wife must be *perfection.*

Sir L. Oh! of course—at least, you will think her so.

Chas. The world must think her so, or I shall not be content. She must have a faultless face, a faultless mind; she must be beautiful without vanity; graceful without conceit; retiring without *mauvaise honte;* talented without display; agreeable without coquetry; amiable without sentimentality; liberal without ostentation; animated without frivolity—

Sir L. Hold! stop! mercy on me, there's no end to your list.

Chas. All this my wife must be.

Sir L. And pray, Charles, supposing the lady should have as long a list of indispensables, what will become of you?

Chas. I can't say; but we are discussing to very little purpose: I shall never live to see the sort of person I describe.

Sir L. Why, really, it will be no very easy matter to find such a one, I admit. Must she sing?

Chas. Like a seraph.

Sir L. Must she draw?

Chas. Like Angelica Kauffman.

Sir L. Must she dance?

Chas. Like a sylph.

Sir L. Well, you really are a most unconscionable person—every accomplishment, and perfect in all! I was going to present you to a fair lady of my acquaintance; but I shall not do so now.

Chas. Don't say so! any friend of yours, as an acquaintance, I can have no objection to. But my wife must be all I describe.

Sir L. All?

Chas. All!

Sir L. Very well, say no more about it. I shall not introduce you to Kate.

Chas. Kate, did you say? Kate! why not? what Kate, which Kate?

Sir L. Oh! never mind; she is not perfection.

Chas. I dare say not. But where is she? who is she?

Sir L. The orphan daughter of General O'Brien, an old Irish friend of mine.

Chas. Irish! oh, I understand—she has a brogue.

Sir L. No, on my honour, she has no brogue.

Chas. Well, what they call a slight Irish accent, then—yes, upon my faith, a mighty pretty, illigant way of talking for a young female.

Sir L. Your ridicule is thrown away, and misapplied. My little friend, Kate O'Brien, has not an atom of her country's accent; though, if she had, I'm sure she has too much good sense to be ashamed of it. However, since you've thought proper to quiz her—I shall not introduce you to her.

Chas. Then I'll be even with you. I'll find out her address—I'll pay her a visit, introduce myself, and declare my worthy uncle sent me.

Sir L. Her address is easily found, for she lives in the next street; but I know you will not have the assurance to call upon her.

Chas. I give you duo notice, sir, that I will, and that within this hour; so, uncle, when we meet again, I shall have seen your Wild Irish Girl. [*Exit*, R.

Sir L. That's the way with them all: tell them they *shall*, and they *won't*; tell them they *shan't*, and they *will*. 'Twas just the same with me—I was desired to marry by father, mother, and maiden aunts, and here I am, like a shrivelled old pea in a pot, at sixty and odd years. If I could but bring these two together, 'twould be something to look at; I should have a chance for a family party on Christmas day, and New-Year's day, and other days, when family men have family parties, and jollifications, and when nobody but old bachelors sit sulkily by themselves. Gad! Charles shan't take the girl by surprise, though! I'll send her a note, and put her on her guard. [*Exit*, R.

Scene III.—*An Apartment at Kate O'Brien's.*

Enter Susan, R.

Sus. Well, gentlefolks, certainly, are the strangest beings: there's no understanding them. My mistress was born with a silver spoon in her mouth—a silver spoon, did I say? law, it must have been a soup ladle, for she's got all the good things of this world about her; and yet she won't marry, and settle, and make herself agreeable, but goes on refusing and refusing, till, one day or t'other, there'll

be nobody to say "no" to. That's not my way; I've thought the matter over very seriously, and I'm resolved to marry, the first opportunity.

Enter Sam, L.

Who can this be, I wonder. Dear me, a very nice, spruce young man. I wish I had put on my t'other cap.

Sam. What a very fine young person! Pray, ma'am, are you Miss O'Brien's maid?

Sus. I am, sir—her *own* maid.

Sam. Oh! you need not tell me that; I saw at once you were an upper servant. There's lady's maid in all your motions.

Sus. Oh, sir, you're vastly genteel. Pray, may I ask your business?

Sam. I've no business at present; I mean to go into business when I marry; and, when I look at you, I wish that were to be this afternoon.

Sus. You misunderstand me. What brought you here?

Sam. I am come from Sir Lawrence Paragon.

Sus. Are you in his service?

Sam. I'm his nephew's man—his *own* man.

Sus. Oh! you needn't tell me that; I saw at once, you were an upper servant. There's gentleman's gentleman in all your motions.

Sam. But at this present moment, I come from Sir Lawrence Paragon; for he has really nobody in his establishment, at all distinguished or respectable; so he likes to employ me, and I am very obliging. Here's a note for your lady, and it's to be delivered immediately. It sounds very ungallant in me to say, but immediately was Sir Lawrence's word.

Sus. I must run with it to my mistress; she is in her boudoir. [*Trying to peep into the note.*] I hate this three-cornered way of folding notes.

Sam. So do I, madam; it curtails one's information sadly. I hope, madam, you'll visit Sir Lawrence's housekeeper; she is vastly genteel, indeed.

Sus. I do drop in there sometimes. Good morning, sir. Tell Mrs. Fritter I shall soon pay her a visit. I wish you a very good morning.

[*Curtesys affectedly, and exit,* L. *Sam,* R.

SCENE IV.—*Kate O'Brien's boudoir—large folding doors in the centre—an elegant couch, with handsome shawl lying on it. Small table, on rollers, chair, &c.*

KATE *discovered.*

Kate. Heigho! why was I born an heiress? envied by my own sex, perpetually teased by the men, and knowing but too well, that I am sought only for my gold. Of one thing I am resolved: I never will marry, 'till I have good reason to know that I am loved for myself alone.

Enter SUSAN, R.

Sus. A note, madam,—no answer, the young man said. A very nice, genteel looking young man he was, too—

Kate. You think of nothing, Susan, but nice young men. Go about your business.

Sus. Well, I'm sure, there's no harm in that. He was a very nice young man, that I will maintain.

[*Exit through the folding doors.*

Kate. [*After reading the note.*] From my good guardian, Sir Lawrence Paragon; and to inform me, as I am to expect a visit from his nephew, he hopes I will appear to the best advantage. I suppose, all my graces now, and none of my airs. [*Reads.*] "*You have only to exert the fascinations you possess, to win his heart, and make me your affectionate uncle.*"—Thankye kindly, sir—I fear your partiality blinds you. But what shall I do with the nephew? "*The woman he marries must be perfection.*" If he resembles Sir Lawrence, I'm sure to like him; and, if so, I may be tempted to try and win him; but it shall be without displaying one of the perfections, which he has declared to be indispensable. He thinks to take me by surprise; but he shall not find me without a plot.

Enter SUSAN, C.

Susan! [*Knock without.*

Sus. Yes, ma'am—[*Aside.*] There is a young gentleman knocking at the door—a very nice looking gentleman—but I don't dare say so.

Kate. Wheel that sofa there. Now for the table. [*Susan wheels table to the front, on which lie a nosegay and a*

portfolio. Kate, throwing herself on sofa.] Now, unfold my shawl. There, throw it over my feet. Make haste. Now leave me.

Sus. What can she be about? I think she is out of her lunacies. [*Exit* L.

Enter Servant, R.

Ser. Mr. Paragon, madam, is below.

Kate. Show him in. [*Servant shows in Charles, and exit.*

Chas. Madam, my uncle, Sir Lawrence Paragon, being prevented calling on you, as he intended, I am obliged to introduce myself.—[*Aside.*] She is exceedingly pretty.

Kate. You will excuse my not rising to receive you, sir. Pray sit down. I am very happy—I am very happy to see you. The nephew of my father's old friend, must always be welcome here.

Chas. [*Aside.*] Come, there's no brogue, however. Her manner is enchanting.—Madam, you are very kind. I am afraid I've called at an unseasonable hour; I have disturbed you; you are reposing—perhaps you were sleeping—possibly dreaming.—[*Aside.*] I wonder she doesn't get up.

Kate. No, sir; you could not have called more opportunely. I have been looking over this endless portfolio of drawings.

Chas. Drawings! are you fond of the art?

Kate. Excessively! I could look at them for ever.

Chas. [*Aside.*] Accomplished creature! I always said, that when I did fall in love, it would be at first sight; and I do believe my time is come at last.

Kate. What a delightful art painting is! to be able to perpetuate the features of those who are dear to us.

Chas. Charming!

Kate. Or to treasure up some remembrances of scenes, in which we have been happy, but which we may never look upon again.

Chas. Delightful!

Kate. Or to copy the classical groups of antiquity, or form new combinations of graceful, lovely figures.

Chas. Oh! your enthusiasm quite enchants me.

Kate. Oh! you are enthusiastic, also?

Chas. Oh, prodigiously! Pray, my dear madam, allow

me to feast my eyes upon some of your drawings.—[*Aside.*] Angelic creature!

Kate. Sir—sir, what did you say?

Chas. Permit me to see one of your performances.

Kate. I regret to say, I never had the least idea of drawing; my houses, my trees, and my cattle, are all one confused jumble of scratches.

Chas. Not draw?

Kate. No—do you?

Chas. I? Oh, no! But I quite misunderstood you. I thought—[*Aside.*] Dear me! what a pity such a sweet creature should lack such a resource, such an accomplishment!

Kate. Is anything the matter, sir?

Chas. Oh, nothing.—[*Aside.*] After all, it is but one. I've no doubt she has all the rest.

Kate. Did you speak?

Chas. I was saying, I never heard so musical a voice.

Kate. Oh, you flatter me. You mention music—do you not doat on it?

Chas. Ah! there we do agree. The woman who sings!

Kate. Yes, sir,

Chas. The woman who plays!

Kate. Yes, sir.

Chas. The woman who does both well, is a divinity. You are an enthusiast in your love of music. I see you are.

Kate. I am, sir: music is my passion! music in the morning; music in the evening; music at the silent hour of night; music on the water—

Chas. What a woman she is!

Kate. Music at any hour.

Chas. Yes, or on any instrument.

Kate. Oh, yes; from the magnificent organ, to the gentle lute.

Chas. Delicious!

Kate. Or a voice—better than all, a soul-enchanting voice.

Chas. [*Aside.*] There is no resisting her.—Oh, madam, sing.

Kate. Alas, sir! how shall I make the sad confession? much as I love music, I can only listen.

Chas. What?

Kate. I have not a singing note in my voice; and no one could ever teach me to play.

Chas. [*Aside.*] Was there ever such an impostor!—Madam, you positively astonish me.

Kate. How so, sir—can you sing?

Chas. Oh, no; men are not expected to acquire those accomplishments; but a woman—that is—I—I—

Kate. I know, sir: you were going to say, that *a woman*, without them, is little better than a *brute*.

Chas. Madam, how can you suppose—

Kate. Ay, sir, and I perfectly agree with you—but, sir, 'tis my misfortune, and not my fault.

Chas. [*Aside.*] What a pensive tone of voice, and what a countenance! there can be no humbug there. Spite of all her lamentable deficiencies, I am fascinated.

Kate. My fate is an unhappy one—I am an orphan, as you know, and, of course, labouring under such defects, I never mean to marry.

Chas. Never mean to marry?

Kate. Never!

Chas. Oh, madam, in mercy to mankind, make not so rash, so inconsiderate a resolve.

Kate. Sir, it is in mercy to mankind I make it. What would be a fond husband's sufferings, were he to see the wife of his bosom sinking under the degrading consciousness that she was unworthy of him?

Chas. Unworthy!

Kate. Would he not cast her from him! Yes, yes, he would do so—I must live on unloved.

Chas. [*Aside.*] By Jove! she is irresistible!—Madam, I adore you—listen to me; oh, listen, and smile on me—hear me: I love you—oh! love me, pray do! [*Kneels.*

Kate. Sir, this is so unlooked-for, so unexpected.

Chas. Nay, do not frown upon me; allow me to hope.

Kate. Rise, sir; you may hope—but the surprise, the agitation—pray ring that bell.

Chas. [*Aside.*] She's going to faint. [*Rings bell,* L.

Kate. So, then, I must retire. My maid shall return, and speak a few words to you; and then, after having seen your uncle, you may visit me again.

Enter SUSAN, C.

Come here, Susan. [*Whispers her.*

Sus. La, madam, is it possible?

Kate. Obey me instantly. Call the servant.

Sus. John, come here, instantly.

Enter JOHN.

Chas. [*Aside.*] What on earth does she want? Why don't she get up?

Kate. Now, Susan, open the doors. John, wheel the sofa into the other room. Adieu, sir; my maid shall return immediately.

[*She is wheeled into the next room, and the door closes.*

Chas. Well, positively, that is the laziest proceeding I ever witnessed. By the by, 'twas all my fault. I suppose she was too faint to move. Oh, here comes the maid.

Enter SUSAN, C.

Sus. [*Aside.*] Well, mistress is mad, that's certain; but I must do as I'm bid.

Chas. How is your mistress? She is a charming creature. What a happy girl you are—what a sweet mistress you have got!

Sus. She *is* charming—poor thing!

Chas. Poor thing! what do you mean by poor thing?

Sus. Oh, it's very sad.

Chas. What is sad?

Sus. You saw my mistress whisper me?

Chas. Yes, to be sure! but there's nothing so sad in a whisper.

Sus. Indeed, but there is, though. She desired me to reveal the affair to you: she had not courage to tell you herself. To be sure, you must have known it, sooner or later.

Chas. What do you mean? You frighten me out of my wits.

Sus. It's a sad affliction, to be sure—a very great defect—she's much to be pitied.

Chas. A defect? *another* defect? and I have committed myself—I've proposed—

Sus. Oh, sir!

Chas. Speak out, do.

Sus. Many years ago—

Chas. That's as bad as "once upon a time." Pray go on—make haste.

Sus. My mistress was thrown from her horse—

Chas. Yes—well, she was not *killed*, so what then?

Sus. [*Pretending to weep.*] Fractured limb—

Chas. Oh! what limb?

Sus. Leg—broke all to bits, and—

Chas. Well, speak.

Sus. Amputation—

Chas. What?

Sus. She has got a cork leg.

Chas. A *cork leg!* Horror! What have I done? engaged myself—I shall go mad!

Sus. Good morning, sir. I must go, if you please, to give my mistress the stick.

Chas. Do, by all means. [*Exit Susan.*] I deserve the stick worst. I, that said I would marry perfection—I've bound myself to the fraction of a woman. [*Exit*, R.

Scene V.—*Room at Sir Lawrence Paragon's.*

Enter Susan *and* Sam, L.

Sam. So, you say my master is actually going to marry her? Bless the man, they'll be a three-legged couple—a matrimonial tripod. Had he seen you, when he proposed for the lady?

Sus. Oh! yes—why?

Sam. Then I wonder at him—that's all.

Sus. Oh! you flatter.

Sam. Let me see. You stand pretty stoutish on your pins, don't you?

Sus. Nonsense. I'll hear no such remarks.

Sam. Gad! I never saw neater timbers. You can stir your stumps with the best of them. That ever my master should marry a hoppikelky!

Sus. You'll not use such nicknames, if you please.

Sam. Don't be angry—but, you know, she has a timber toe. Why, my master always used to say, his wife should be perfection; and now he takes a woman whose body turns on a pivot. Here he comes, as if he was hunting after your mistress's other leg.

Sus. I'll leave you, then, Sam. My presence will only make him worse. I suppose I shall see him by and by at Miss O'Brien's. Oh, they'll be a sweet couple. [*Exit*, L.

Sam. Sweet couple! couple of ducks, standing on one leg, with the other tucked under the left wing.

Enter CHARLES, L.

Chas. I wonder if the wind is fair for America. Not that any other place wouldn't do as well; only the farther off the better.

Sam. Do you dress for dinner, sir? What shall I put out?

Chas. Out of my way, sir. I'll not change. Oh, Sam, Sam, I'm going to change my condition; I'm going to be married!

Sam. Married! Oh, what a lady you must have seen! I never thought you would have found one perfect enough. At all events, when she saw you, sir, I warrant she put her best foot foremost.

Chas. Best foot! Oh, Sam!—but it doesn't signify. Where's my uncle?

Sam. He is coming, sir.

Chas. Then you'll begone. You'll nave to go in mourning for me, very soon. Oh, Sam! Sam!

Sam. [*Aside.*] Master's mad. I suppose it's all along of love. [*Exit*, L.

Enter SIR LAWRENCE, R.

Sir L. [*Aside.*] Foolish girl—I hate all plots. She has told me of her mad schemes. I must not frustrate them. Here is the inconsolable. I must affect ignorance.—Well, Charles, you have seen her, I suppose? How is this? you seem agitated. What's the matter?

Chas. Agitated! well I may be, sir.

Sir L. Explain.

Chas. I have at least done what you wished me—to make a long story short, I've offered Miss O'Brien my hand and heart.

Sir L. No! you delight me. Tol de rol!

Chas. Oh! don't dance about, uncle; you'll bring on your rheumatism. It's no dancing business, I assure you.

Sir L. I never was so happy. Is she not perfect?

Chas. Perfect! Ah, sir! that is as all people may think. I fear you have not seen her lately.

Sir L. Not lately—no—but is she not indeed perfection? Yes, and so you have already thrown yourself at her feet.

Chas. Feet! I wish that were possible.

Sir L. Well, now my fondest hopes are realised. I thought she would take steps to ingratiate herself in your favour.

Chas. Take steps! Heigho!

Sir L. I knew how it would be; and I will say this for you, Charles, she is a fortunate girl; there's many a one would be glad to step into her shoes.

Chas. Shoes! alas! he knows not what he says. She knows the substantive shoe only in the singular number;—she never buys a pair. What are rights and lefts to her!

Sir L. You look as if you were in a hobble.

Chas. A hobble, sir? You lacerate me.

Sir L. How is this! sighing! you have made but a lame love affair, I am afraid. But now tell me: you always said the woman you married should possess every accomplishment, every perfection. Of course, she draws.

Chas. Why, no—she doesn't exactly possess that accomplishment.

Sir L. Not draw? dear—that can't be helped. Of course, she sings?

Chas. With humiliation, I confess she cannot sing.

Sir L. Well, well; never mind; don't be cast down. At all events, her dancing makes amends.

Chas. Sir, she is unable to dance.

Sir L. Oh, nonsense; you are jesting. I shall live to see you foot it together.

Chas. Foot it! she can't foot it.

Sir L. Not foot it?—pooh! I'll make her foot it—she shall dance with me—egad, I'll invite all the country round; ay, and I'll give her a hop.

Chas. It must be a hop, if she has anything to do with it. But every word you say wounds me deeply, sir. The fact is, she's a miserable object.

Sir L. A what?

Chas. Mutilated.

Sir L. Halt! young man, halt!

Chas. That's it, sir—she is halt.

Sir L. What do you mean, young man?

Chas. She has a cork leg.

Sir L. A cork leg?

Chas. You know the whole truth.

Sir L. My dear Charles—but did you propose?

Chas. Alas! I did. I knew not of her misfortunes, till afterwards—but I have committed myself, and, as a man of honour, I cannot retract.

Sir L. Oh, dear me, Charles—my dear Charles, my poor boy, my own nephew, this must not be. You were not aware—you *must* not, shall not be aware. You shall not marry her. Go to her; say I sent you; pretend to be in despair: say I forbid you to marry her; say anything; apologize; explain. Lay all upon me. You must be extricated. I'll go and consult my lawyer. Cheer up, my lad, all will end well.—[*Aside.*] That it will. No fear now; it will be a match. [*Exit*, R.

Chas. Poor girl—poor Kate; poor, dear, melancholy, mutilated Kate. Why, how is this? am I not in love? What am I about to do? renounce her? she is unfortunate—no, no. Leave her to limp through the world alone? I'm no such cold-hearted coward. I'll fly to her, and offer her this arm to lean on through life. [*Exit*, R.

Scene VI.—*Kate O'Brien's boudoir—guitar on table, drawings, &c.*—Kate *discovered.*

Kate. Will he come? alas, no! I fear not. How can I expect it. Hark! is not that his step? yes, yes, 'tis he; and I am safe. [*Springs on sofa.*

Enter Charles, R.

You come, then, once more. You are welcome. You come to bid me farewell.

Chas. No, you wrong me. I come to claim your hand.

Kate. Ha! consider—you will repent too late.

Chas. No, I will not repent. When I offered to be your protector and friend, I knew not how much you needed both; and now, that I do know it, do you think that I will desert you? Never!

Kate. Generous man! take my hand, and when I forget your kindness, neglect and spurn me. I have already endeavoured to show my sense of your goodness—I have prepared a surprise for you. You seemed disappointed at my not being able to draw. In your absence, I have endeavoured to make a sketch. Here it is.

Chas. Wonderful! what a likeness! 'tis your own portrait.

Kate. I'm glad you think it like. Take it; and remember, 'twas my first gift.

Chas. Thanks! a thousand thanks.

Kate. You are fond of music, too. Like most young ladies, when they are asked to sing, I refused at first—but now, if you press me sufficiently, I may be induced to own, I can sing a little.

Chas. Pray, sing—I—I implore—

[*Kate takes the guitar and sings.*

[*Song.*]—"Kate Kearney."

Chas. The very style I dote on. I'm transported, perfectly! And, now, what new surprise have you?

Kate. Only one.

[*A pause. She springs from the sofa, with the guitar.*

Chas. Take care—you will hurt yourself. Lean on me. [*Kate sings and dances.*] What am I to think?

Kate. Think, only, they've brought machinery to very high perfection.

Chas. Impossible! nay, your leg never was fractured.

Kate. It never was.

Chas. Huzza! my wife's perfection. She has feet—and thus I fall at them. [*Kneels.*

Enter Sir Lawrence, L.

Sir L. Keep him there, Kate—let him always be your slave.

Chas. Oh, uncle, she is perfection! I am the happiest dog alive.

Sir L. I knew her scheme, and the result delights me. But, remember, your vanity has been humbled. You vowed you would marry perfection—you! as if you deserved such a wife; and now I have seen you implore a girl to have you, who you thought had no accomplishments, and only one leg to stand on.

Chas. I own it—yes, Kate—after all, I suppose, it must be admitted that I have not met with that monster, a perfect woman; for you, certainly, displayed one little failing.

Kate. Well, what is it, pray?

Chas. Fibbing! A cork leg! Oh, fie!

Kate. Nay, I told you no fib.

Chas. How so?

Kate. I have a *cork* leg—absolutely *two* cork legs—for I was born in Cork, in the province of Munster, in my own dear native Ireland.

Chas. Cork! Well, Sir Lawrence, we must admit she is a cork model of a perfect woman.

Sir L. Too good for you, depend upon it. Oh, that I had married such a woman!

Kate. Well, after all, perhaps some may imitate me, with advantage; for I concealed from my *lover* some of the accomplishments I possess; and, consequently, my husband, finding me so much better than he expected, may think me *perfection*. And if those around me think favourably of the Maid of Munster, she cares not how often her lameness may return; for she will trust for her support to their indulgent kindness.

DISPOSITION OF THE CHARACTERS AT THE FALL OF THE CURTAIN.

CHARLES. KATE O'BRIEN. SIR LAWRENCE.
R.] [L.

THE END.

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